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# ALCHEMY:

BY

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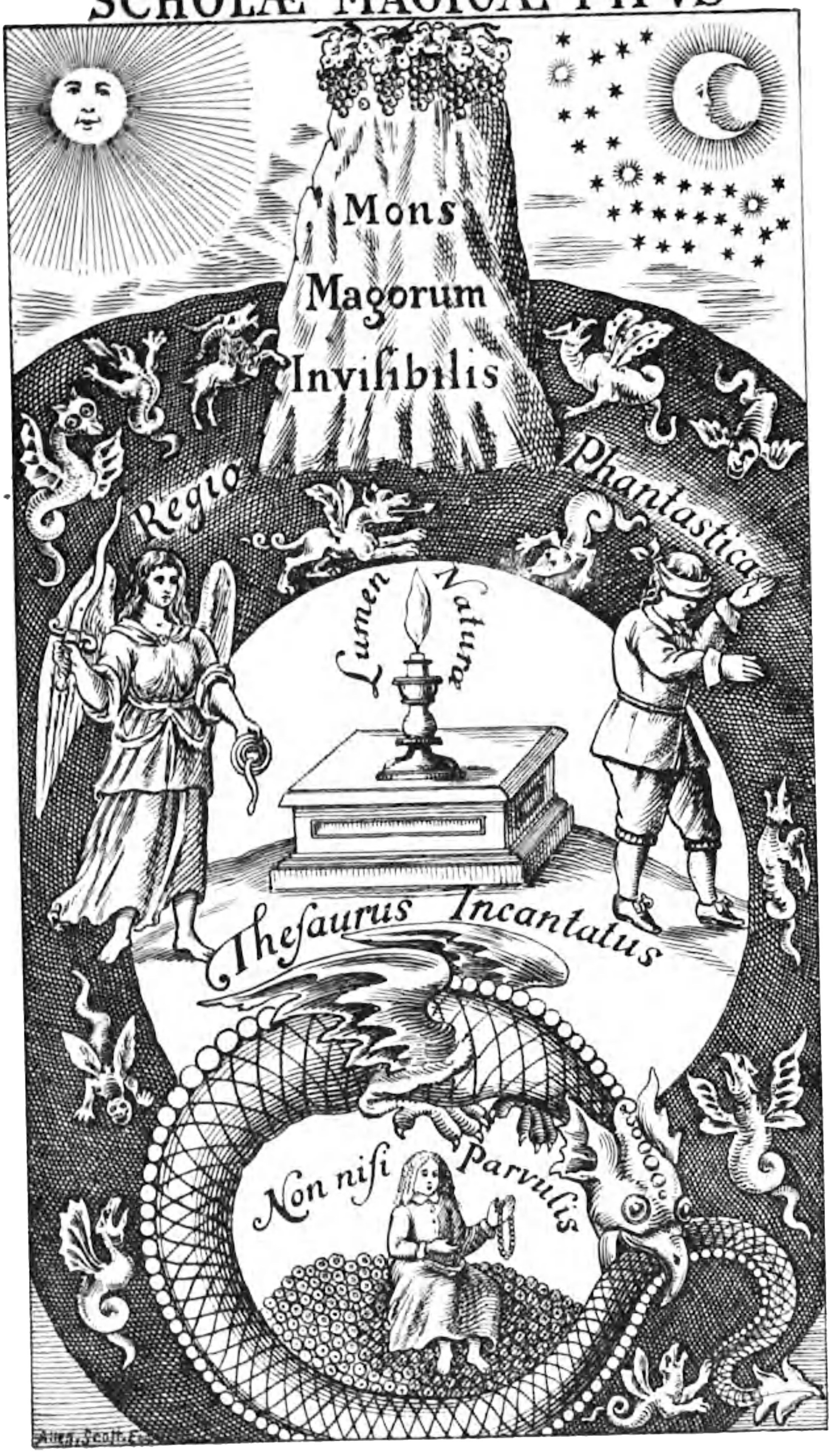
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# ALCHEMY.

## DIFFICULTIES AND DANGERS IN ITS PURSUIT.

**"Non ti fidiare al alchemista povero, o medico ammalato."**

FROM the very cradle of the greatest civilizations of Antiquity, the precious metals, Gold and Silver, have formed the basis of commercial transactions, facilitated their expansion, and contributed to the mutual intercourse and welfare of mankind. Commerce made easy leads to mutual advancement, civilization, and the spread of knowledge.

Gold and Silver must necessarily, at first, have been obtained from the localities where Nature had deposited them. When their great convenience had once established them in general use as the means of obtaining this world's goods—which are considered to be not only the necessaries of life, but also the product of the toil, industry and ingenuity of some classes of men, or of the luxuries and special fruits of one richly endowed soil and climate to be transported to other countries not so favoured—it is evident that the desire of men to possess as much as possible of the precious metals would stimulate some more ambitious and cleverer than their fellows to try to imitate the processes of Nature. From what we now know to be the extreme difficulty of it, we might reasonably suppose that no one, by the exercise of a mere physical intellect, would be able to succeed in doing so. Gold is mentioned at the earliest period of history, but before the time of Hermes Trismegistus there is no early record of anyone having in this way succeeded in Chrusopoieia. Whether there are not slight evidences of its having been so performed, under peculiar circumstances, in later times, we shall allude to further on. We may take it as presumptive evidence that it was not so done, because we may be sure that if it had been many would have done it, and Gold, which was then, at least, the scarcest of all metals, would have become so plentiful that the market would have been over supplied, and it would have lost its value and use as a convenient mode of exchange. The history of the primitive world gives not the slightest indication that this ever took place. Crœsus is related to have obtained his immense wealth from the gold found in the sands of the

river Pactolus in Lybia. It would seem he must have taken it all, for Strabo, the Geographer, says none was found there in his time.

The scientific world and the generality of (so-called) educated men, notwithstanding the evidence of all Antiquity, and of, comparatively, more modern witnesses, such as Picus Mirandula, Helvetius, Athanasius Kircher, and others, still affect to doubt whether it ever was done. We have not the slightest wish to make any attempt to convince those who are guided by prejudice and feeling, or the shibboleth of a party, instead of the right use of the logical faculty in deliberately and carefully sifting the whole of the evidence for or against on any given subject. The scientific world is still swayed by loose reasoning and exploded prejudices. It is as well that such men should not believe it. We write not for them. The mark of the true Magus is, by the sternest self-discipline, to have rooted out all prejudices and to have left the mind perfectly free to receive as truth what the preponderance of evidence, as judged by the logical faculty, declares to be such, and utterly to disregard the fashion of the times on any subject. These only will give heed to what we say. "Unless ye become as little children, ye cannot enter the Kingdom of Heaven" may be understood to apply to the removing of prejudices and educational errors.

We would not have presumed to offer our own ideas on the Golden Fleece were it not that, firstly, we have been strongly urged to do so, and, secondly, because at the present moment the revival of Occultism has brought in its train, as it always has done, a strongly awakened attention to that one branch of it called Alchemy. That many may not labour in vain at it, we would put before them a few considerations drawn, not from the practice exactly, but from the long contemplation of the lives and calamities of those who have, or, at least, are supposed to have performed this Magnum Opus.

As a basis of what we would wish to submit to them is the very able and useful book recently published, "Lives of Alchemistical Philosophers," by Edward Arthur Waite. In the Introductory Essay to his book, followed by the Theory and Practice of the Magnum Opus, Mr. Waite, in eloquent phraseology, examines and comments on some of the latest modern writers on the subject, and with great perspicacity and justice weighs in the balances their probable errors, and declares his own firm belief in opposition to some of these modern Alchemical writers, that it was real material gold which the old Alchemists sought, and not solely the psychical regeneration and perfection of Man.

Mr. Waite also shows the probable use of the "Intuitive Faculty" in those who have attained to the "Magnum Opus." Herein we most cordially agree with him. We have, at the beginning of this Paper, alluded to the extreme improbability of anyone reaching this greatly desired goal by the exercise of the mere physical intellectual powers, however elevated

they might be above those of the ordinary run of mortals. We must look elsewhere for a confirmation of Mr. Waite's reasoning as to what was revealed by the intuitive faculties.

Now, in ancient India there existed, of the glorious Aryan race, "Munis," or inspired men, *i.e.*, intuitive. To them we are indebted for the sublime Sciences of Algebra, Astronomy, etc., and if to them we owe so much in this direction, we may safely presume that these were the men, if any, to penetrate intuitively all the secrets of Nature, and behold, by Divine Inspiration, how gold had been formed in the earth. As the Algebra they in this way invented has come down to us, or, more probably, some portion only of it, so we may reasonably conclude did some remnants of their knowledge of transmutation of metals. There are treatises in Sanscrit upon it. What exactly was the connexion between ancient India and Egypt, history does not tell us. That the Misraimites, or Mezzoranians, or Egyptians were skilled in the esoteric sciences is beyond doubt. Hermes Trismegistus was a reality. Possibly both were colonies from the ancient Atlantis, and had both brought with them the Science of Magic. Whatever the source, both Aryans and Mezzoranians had this Science, and by it Hermes Trismegistus made laws for and governed Egypt, giving it dynasties lasting through ages and ages. In Ragon's "Maçonnerie Occulte" he quotes from the "Œdipus Ægyptiacus" of the learned Jesuit, Athanasius Kircher (t. ii., p. 2, De Alchym., c. 1), expresses himself thus as to *Hermes* :—

"It is so certain that these first men possessed *the art of making gold*, whether by extracting it from all sorts of matters, or by transmuting the metals, that he who doubted it, or would fain deny it, would show himself perfectly ignorant of history. The priests, the kings, and the heads of families were alone instructed in it. This art was always kept a great secret, and those who were possessors of it always maintained a profound silence, for fear that the laboratories and the sanctuary the most concealed of Nature, being discovered to an ignorant people, they would turn this knowledge to the injury of the Republic. The ingenious and prudent *Hermes*, foreseeing this danger which threatened the State, had then reason for concealing this art of making gold under the same veils and under the same hieroglyphic obscurities, of which he availed himself to conceal from the profane people that part of philosophy which concerned God, angels, and the universe."

Ragon goes on to say: "It required the evidence and the force of truth to draw such an avowal from this most learned father, who, upon many occasions, has disputed the existence of the philosopher's stone." One of these occasions is given in "Histoire de la Philosophie Hermétique, par M. l'Abbé Langlet du Fresnoy" (Tom. ii. p. 51). A young man, an unsuccessful seeker of the philosopher's stone, was visited by a perfect stranger,

who showed him a process for making it, did it with him, and with the powder so made the young man did convert a large quantity of mercury into pure gold. At the stranger's dictation he wrote down the recipe. Yet he never could do it again, nor find the stranger. Kircher, in accordance with the practice of his church, intimated that the strange visitor was the devil.

Ragon proceeds to say that the gold then found in all the mines of the world would not have sufficed for the expense of raising the extraordinary monuments, the sumptuous palaces, the immense works which covered the soil of Egypt, but infers that it must have come from the sacred laboratories.

There is an abundance of testimony from other sources, that the Hierarchy or Priest-kings of Ancient Egypt were adepts in the transmutatory art, and, for some centuries, ruled with great justice and equity the rest of the nation by means of the great advantage which this and the discipline of Initiation gave them. It was necessary, therefore, to enshrine this knowledge in the most profound secrecy. Hence the invention of Hieroglyphics and a Symbolism, in which the process is involved in the most intricate, fantastic, and perplexing images, the meaning of which none but the Initiates were able to penetrate. There is reason to believe that the Isiac Table is a revelation to Initiates of the whole process. This Initiation was an ordeal that none but those highly gifted by Nature, such as Moses, Pythagoras, Plato, Apollonius Tyanæus, and some few others could undergo and live. When they had passed it, they had attained to such a mastery of themselves as not to be likely to make an ill use of this knowledge, even if the penalty of death had not awaited those who divulged the Mysteries of Initiation.*

It is, more especially, to this withholding the secrets of Chrusopoieia from all but those who had achieved the mastery of themselves to which we would now refer. Mr. Waite, as we mentioned above, has shown the different views held by some modern writers, one part maintaining that all the symbolic and mystic allusions of the Alchemists had reference to the human body and soul—to Man—and denying that it included the literal transmutation of the inferior metals into gold. What we have just now given as to the Ancient Initiations, and the books to which we have referred, tend to show that the two things were combined in one; that unless the aspirant had passed the ordeal, guaranteeing his complete subjugation of the lower passions, the knowledge of Chrusopoieia was for ever forbidden to him.

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* See Christian's "Histoire de la Magie à travers les ages," &c., pp. 106 to 143. Also, "Initiations aux mystères d'Isis dans la pyramide de Memphis," and "Initiation aux Mystères de Mithra au Science Magiques des Chaldéens d'Assyrie. Par Henri Delaage"

The Hermetic Philosophers understood well the duplex symbolism of their Art, *i.e.*, both its physical and its psychical meaning, *e.g.*, in the Bodleian Library at Oxford is a large scroll done by Sir George Ripley, containing Hermetic Symbolism. At one end is the Fool, or merely natural man, drawn exactly according to the Zero, or first Symbol of the Taro. At the other end is the portraiture of the well-balanced and highly-developed head of the Adept. The Zero may mean either the unregenerate man, or the Prima Materia, the Chaos, of the Alchemists. The space between the Fool and the Adept contains various Symbols applicable either to the progressive stages in finding the philosopher's stone, or to the process of Regeneration of Man.

We know there are individuals in various parts of this country who are secretly or openly working at the Hermetic Art. We do not tell them it is a hopeless task, for undoubtedly history tends to show it has been done even by those who have not become regenerate by a *regular* process of Initiation, but the same history shows that the percentage of those who have so succeeded is very small, and of this small number there is a fatal record of the direst calamities and miseries coming upon some of them.

Mr. Waite gives a list of more than fifty real or supposed Adepts from Geber to Cagliostro. To go through all these would far exceed the limits permitted to us, and we can only take a few of the most prominent. The Monks, such as Roger Bacon, Basil Valentine, Sir George Ripley and others we may pass over as coming under the category of those who had subdued their passions by an ascetic life, even if they had not undergone an actual Initiation, which seems to be more than probable. Although these could undoubtedly perform the Magnum Opus, the evidence is that they made no use of it for their own mere animal and worldly enjoyment, which of itself shows the attainment of the greatest self-control.

Nicolas Flamel is one of the first prominent laymen whom modern history asserts to have been a true Adept, but that he did not attain to it till late in life. So many years of patient perseverance and the necessary self-denial, the all-absorbing mental concentration, all going on to an advanced period of life, must have been a discipline acting on the same lines as progressive Initiation and, perhaps, equivalent to it in subduing the lower passions. No self-indulgence is recorded of him, but he used his wealth to build churches, alms-houses and hospitals, succoured the needy and did every good work. Éliphas Lévi † remarks that his final success was owing to his personal preparation. What can this mean but the same effect which is produced by progressive Initiation? According to Mr. Waite, the reputation he had of possessing the philosopher's stone brought him under the notice of the king, who sent for him. Perceiving

† "Dogme and Rituel de la Haute Magie," Tom 1 p 355.

the danger he incurred in complying with this summons, he contrived that his wife should appear to die and be buried, but, in reality, she fled to another country, when he also enacted for himself a pseudo-death and burial, but secretly went and joined his wife, and that they were seen alive many years after in another country. If this be true, his Adeptship was environed by a great danger, which his sagacity and prudence alone enabled him to avoid. Had the king demanded his secret and he refused to reveal it, he might have ended his days in the Bastile which Charles VI. had just completed.

Bernard Trevisan passed a whole life and spent all his patrimony in vainly trying to make gold, and was reduced to the greatest extremity of poverty, but at last, when he was seventy-five years of age, as he said, by laborious comparing one Alchemical writer with another, picking out a little from each and putting the whole together, did at last find out the secret. This is the piece of evidence we alluded to in our opening remarks as tending to show it could be done by a mere physical Adeptship, but what we have said as to Nicolas Flamel is equally applicable to him. A life-time spent and energies concentrated on the constant search for the one thing, and latterly in poverty, expatriation, and actual want and privation, must of itself have been equal to an Initiation, and have included in it the abasement of the mere animal passions and a corresponding elevation of the higher faculties, which at last enabled him to triumph. We know that Swedenborg became lucid at the age of fifty-seven, and Cardan at about the same age. Trevisan's lucidity may have been delayed to a still later period, and it might, after all, have been a psychic Adeptship which at last gave him the entrance to the shut palace of the king. Of him, Lenglet du Fresnoy* writes " It was a feeble consolation to have consummated uselessly considerable wealth at the end of more than sixty years, to have been exposed to the most extreme misery, and even to see himself forced to expatriation that his misery might not be known, and not to arrive at the consummation till the age of seventy-five years, an age at which a man can no longer enjoy wealth. However, if Bernard did find, he enjoyed it for some few years, but can one call by the title of enjoyment riches acquired at the expense of his repose, and at the age of decrepitude, when one ought to be no longer occupied with anything but the possession of future good?" To this we answer that his more than sixty years freedom from debasing worldly pleasures, and the exercise of his will in elevating his psychic powers were the true riches with which to enter upon the next world. We have no account of his abusing the great power he possessed during the remaining years of his life. Men act from habit, which in his case was formed by voluntary long and painful abstinence.

* "Philosophie Hermetique," Tom. I., p. 244.

This habit was the passport to his final success, and we may reasonably suppose that he considered himself happy to have achieved it even at the cost of so much suffering. His example, however, does not give much encouragement to those who are seeking this power for their own selfish and worldly purposes.

The next prominent adept is the man of apparent contradictions, the marvellous Paracelsus, the pupil of the great Trithemius, who, at the early age of thirty years, had so far advanced that an Arabian Adept at Constantinople revealed to him the great secret, or so much of it as he did not know already. The Arabian must have perceived that he had so far progressed that he was justified in revealing to him what no possessor will impart to an unworthy person, even if it cost him his life to refuse. Much mystery has hung about the death of Paracelsus at the early age of forty-eight years, for the unravelling of which we are greatly indebted to the careful researches of Dr. Franz Hartmann, at Salzburg, which seem to prove conclusively that he was assassinated. This extraordinary man must have used his powers with the greatest moderation, for in his life there was no ostentation nor ambition of high station, and at his death no signs of great wealth were found. His one care seems to have been to heal the sick, performing such cures as are not recorded of any Medicus before or since, and to have been content to live on his professional income, and scorning to use his Alchemical knowledge for his own pleasure or convenience. Éliphas Lévi has said in his remarks upon evocations* that Schroepffer and Lavater, who practised this dangerous form of magic, both died a violent death, the one by suicide, the other by assassination, and seems to intimate that in these two cases the evocation of spirits was, at least, the indirect cause of this tragical consummation. Whether there was any irregularity in the occult practice of Paracelsus likely to lead to such a calamity, there is no reliable evidence. The kind of life he is said to have passed does not show any great personal comfort or worldly advantage which he derived from the immense power his Illumination gave him, but rather an intense strain upon his bodily and mental functions, which his profound knowledge caused him to perceive must be equilibriated by seasons of conviviality and festive relaxation. His early death seems revolting to all our ideas of what should be the last end of an Adept. Whether he revealed too much to princes is a question not easy to solve. If he did, it may account for that fate overtaking him, which is the allotted portion of the revealers of mysteries. Let those who are entering upon this study consider well the dangers that bristle on their path.

We will only make a passing allusion to Dr. John Dee. Although he had passed probably as many years in the pursuit of the philosopher's stone, yet the extreme poverty and dependence of his last years attest that

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* "Histoire de la Magie," p 456.

he could not have performed the Magnum Opus, and that his endeavours to obtain it by communicating with spirits opens up a lugubrious vista of the degradation and humiliation brought upon a man of genius and learning by this risky means. We possess a MS. purporting to have belonged to him which gives the symbols of formulæ for evoking the spirits of the planet Venus to gain from them the knowledge of transmutations of metals. Dr. Dee is another lamentable instance of the perils and sufferings incurred by those who try to gain this great prize by running the race without regarding the wise rules laid down by the ancient sages.

Apparently, the most successful as well the most unfortunate and wretched of all Adepts was the Scotchman, Alexander Seton, calling himself Cosmopolites. Mr. Waite gives his history. It seems nothing less than utter infatuation on the part of Seton, in visiting Holland and Germany, to have made projections in the presence of such various people. This infatuation was only equalled by the great courage and fortitude he afterwards displayed when put to the torture by the Elector of Saxony to force him to discover his secret. In this he showed the spirit of the true Adept. And yet his singular folly and imprudence cannot be otherwise designated than as being contrary to all the rules which should guide those who have been admitted to this great arcanum. Mr. Waite does not mention it, but it is known to a few that the mode in which he gained his knowledge was not quite regular. He had a sister, a natural Clairvoyante, whose health he ruined by employing her lucidity in his researches. He also made an evocation of a spirit whom we will not name, and, by this means, gained possession of a powerful Ancient Talisman. In this irregularity we may, perhaps, discern the cause of his great imprudence above alluded to. Spirits always turn the tables on those who constrain them, if they have the opportunity. Neither did Seton, like Flamel, use his wealth for charitable purposes, but simply for his own personal wealth and enjoyment. For two years after escaping from the Elector of Saxony by the aid of Sendivogius, he underwent the greatest bodily suffering from the effects of the rack and the hot irons applied to him. He told Sendivogius that, had not his body been completely disorganized by the terrible torture of the rack, his Elixir would have restored him. We may suppose that his mental agonies could not have been less than his bodily sufferings. From these he was released by death at the end of two years. His fate does not encourage anyone to endeavour, by devious paths, to compass the Art of Transmutation for the purpose of self-enjoyment and the gratification of ambitious worldly desires.

There is another not included in the list given by Mr. Waite, the also unfortunate Dr. Price, of Guildford. This brings transmutation nearer to our own times, for it was in the year 1782, from May 6th to May 28th, upon eight different occasions, in the presence of witnesses varying from

four in the first experiment to fifteen in the last but one, Lords Onslow, King, and Palmerston being amongst the number, Dr. Price did transmute inferior metals into gold and silver which stood the test of the assayers in London and Oxford. Every precaution was taken against deception, those coming to the trial bringing the metals to be transmuted and other things with them. There seemed to be no doubt in the minds of those present that Dr. Price had fully succeeded in transmuting inferior metals into pure gold and silver. All this is given at length in the "Annual Register" for 1782. It is also given in the "Gentleman's Magazine," as we suppose, of the same date, but this we have not ourselves seen. It seems to us impossible to read this account of his various transmutations, so often repeated, and before so many creditable and watchful witnesses, without being convinced that if he had used any of the well-known tricks of the pseudo-artists, he must have been detected.

The sequel to this strange history is, that the Royal Society of which Dr. Price was a Fellow called upon him, on pain of expulsion if he refused, to repeat the experiment in their presence. He attempted it and failed. We are precluded from obtaining from himself the causes of this failure, for he forthwith went and committed suicide. The Fellows of the Royal Society would, no doubt, be glad to take this as conclusive evidence that he could not, and never had done it. And yet there were fifteen witnesses of high intelligence and as competent to judge of this particular question as any of the Fellows of the Royal Society, who could have had no special experience in this department. In a Court of Law, we opine, the positive evidence of the fifteen witnesses would out-weigh the negative evidence of the Fellows of the Royal Society. As Occultists we know there may have been other reasons for his failure under such conditions, and what we may call, hostile influences, for we may consider the question prejudged, or they would have been content with, and not ignored, the evidence of fifteen such good witnesses as they were. As Occultists we know that Dr. Price was contravening all the laws of Initiation to attempt to make it a public matter, and was therefore pre-doomed to pay the penalty of failure and death.

As yet we have not succeeded in obtaining any information as to how Dr. Price became possessed of the powder of projection with which he effected the transmutations, whether he made it himself, or whether a small quantity only had been given him by some Adept, and that he had exhausted his stock, or nearly so, in the eight experiments above mentioned, or whether he had learned it from intercourse with spirits, and they, according to their wont, turned treacherous to him in his greatest need, we have not been able to discover. Sendivogius was presented by Alexander Seton with a goodly portion of the powder of projection, and, with this, Sendivogius posed as an Adept, published Seton's writings as his own, and transmuted in the presence of Royalty, and received high honours and

appointments, but, when his powder was all expended, he became the veriest charlatan and impostor, descending to the meanest tricks, and narrowly escaping the sad fate of Alexander Seton. In the same way, in France, one Delisle is supposed to have possessed himself of the powder of projection by murdering an Adept. Beginning from the year 1708, he deceived the world by his public transmutations, whereby he gained the reputation of being a real Adept, but, at last coming under the notice of Royalty, he was arrested. His guards, knowing he had some of the powder of projection on his person, resolved to kill him to possess themselves of it. With this intention they gave him an opportunity of escaping, that they might have a pretext for firing upon him. Delisle availed himself of this chance, and was fired at and not killed, but only his thigh broken. In this miserable condition, he was imprisoned in the Bastille, and before the end of a year, tired of his miserable existence, destroyed himself by poisoning the wound which the soldiers had given him. Before his death he confessed he did not know how to make the powder, but had it from an Italian Adept. This probably is the one he was supposed to have murdered. How this murdered man gained his knowledge we have not been able to glean any precise information, though it seems he was acknowledged by Lascaris to have been a true son of the Transmutatory Art. The history of Delisle may bear somewhat upon the miserable fate of Dr. Price, from which, by analogy, there may reasonably be considerable doubt whether, even if he were an Adept, he had not, like Alexander Seton, gained his knowledge in a questionable and irregular way. To make projection in public seems of itself to be evidence of a doubtful and risky Initiation, and dire retribution in the shape of terrible personal suffering and suicide usually follows it.

Even as we write, there appears from Paris the startling account of one Tiffereau, calling himself the "Alchemist of the Nineteenth Century" lecturing to an assemblage of eager listeners on his grand discovery of a new method of making gold artificially, proclaiming publicly the details of the process, and demanding that the Government should furnish him with the means of setting up a workshop in Paris whence he could supply the manufactured article at £6 sterling, or as low even as £3 for about 2 lbs. of gold. The present price of gold is not quite £4 per oz. Like Bernard Trevisan, he has passed a long life in the pursuit of the Transmutatory Art, but unlike Trevisan, he does not seem to have really found it, even in his old age. Eliphas Lévi, in his "Analysis of the seven chapters of Hermes," lays down as an axiom *"He who would make known the *Magnum Opus*, would prove thereby that he knew it not." Judging by this, we may reasonably and perhaps safely conclude that Tiffereau, instead of finding by his long years of search and spending all his money on it, has become hallucinated, and like all demented men, now seeks to hallucinate

* "La clef des grands mystères," p 450.

others, and yet with method in his madness, aims at obtaining from the Government the reward of the public gold, which a life-time of research has not enabled him to make for himself. The "Daily Telegraph" had a leading article upon Tiffereau, in which the writer used the threadbare and stock arguments to show that gold cannot be artificially made, and evinces the usual amount of ignorance on the history of the subject. He does, however, perceive and dilate upon, what we have hereinbefore remarked, the complete dislocation of commerce and universal disaster which must ensue, if it could be done so as to be generally known. If Tiffereau has succeeded, as he says, we shall encounter strange changes ere long. Our frontispiece is a copy of one prefixed to a German edition of one of the works of Eugenius Philalethes. The interpretation of it is: The man blindfolded is the Candidate for Initiation into the Mysteries. He wanders in the Labyrinth of Fantasy, led by his own natural instincts, and is deluded by the Elementals or other beings in harmony with his lower tendencies. Ariadne is on the left with the thread in her hand ready to give him the clue for his liberation, but he turns himself from her and simultaneously from the Light of Nature into the region of darkness, which he appears to love better than Light. Possibly, this may have the same signification as the man putting his hand to the plough and looking back, and his consequent unfitness and rejection.

At the bottom of the frontispiece is represented debased human nature under the symbol of a winged dragon which devours its own tail. By this is signified the Initiate conquering his vices and lower inclinations, before he can develop the higher phases of his being, and so render himself fit to be intrusted with the great secrets and powers of Nature.

Within the circle formed by this dragon is seated the Adept, who has passed the ordeal and conquered in all the progressive stages of trial. Having learned to command himself, he is now fit to command others. The "thesaurus incantatus," or enchanted treasure, is laying in profusion around him.

At the upper part, just outside the Region of Fantasy, is the invisible mountain of the Magi, the Sun, Moon, and stars symbolizing the Macrocosm and all its powers and influences known only to these true Adepts, and alluding probably to the seclusion of the Rosicrucians. Philalethes and other Adepts call the attaining to the *Magnum Opus* the gift of God. Our frontispiece gives an intimation of what he means by this. When a man has conquered himself and made himself one with the Great Soul of the Universe, according to the Oriental philosophy, he becomes a God, and we may suppose this to be the concealed meaning of Philalethes and others, in these words. This Adept, whom we verily believe to have performed chrusopoieia at a very early age, does not appear making transmutations before kings or noblemen, and in his various works he writes as obscurely, symbolically, and enigmatically as any Ancient Egyptian

Hierophant could desire. None but the Initiated could discover the true meaning of his alchemical writings. His design was only to mislead all but the Initiates. He probably had a further design to make himself known to the Rosicrucians, and to let them see that he would not reveal this Sacred Arcanum. It is supposed that he did ultimately join that Order, but his later years are wrapped in apparently impenetrable obscurity. According to his own account such was the state of society under the then existing regime, such the tyranny and despotism pervading even commercial transactions, such formalities and obstructions, that he had the greatest difficulty in disposing of the gold and silver he had made, and was obliged to roam from country to country, and city to city, and assume all sorts of disguises to conceal his identity. Even for this genuine Adept, his very success brought with it, in those times, anxiety for his personal safety, discomfort, and harassing cares. When the Rosicrucians admitted him into their Order, as it seems likely they did, these anxieties ought to have ceased, but the Rosicrucians themselves were obliged to leave Europe on account of persecutions and dangers, which we will not here more particularly enter into.

The summing up of the evidence we have adduced is simply that Chrusopoieia has been in the past and can still be effected, but that in order to be a successful Alchemist a man must either at an early age first conquer his lower nature, and have no desire left for what are by worldly men considered the advantages of wealth, and have disciplined himself never to reveal the secret, giving hostages to Silence, speaking only in vague and enigmatical verbosity, or he may possibly attain to it by a life-long weary search, and when he shall have arrived at an age when the bodily and mental powers are waning and the grave is yawning to receive him, discover it, as did Bernard Trevisan. Like Tiffereau, he may pass his whole life in the weary search, and at the same age as Trevisan, instead of finding, lose the equilibrium of his faculties, and die in poverty and misery. He may wrest the eagerly desired knowledge, by a fatal pact with spirits, who will take care that he shall not long enjoy his riches without some terrible calamity overtaking him. *Verbum sat sapienti.*

A work devoted entirely to a research into all the details of the lives of the Alchemists, if research would find such details, we believe would fully confirm that of which we are only able to give a faint outline. We feel sure such a work would overwhelmingly show the futility of making gold by way of hasting to be rich, and using it to enjoy this world's pleasures. Let those who have opportunity and leisure try to throw such a side-light on the Hermetic Art in the lives of its Professors, and they will be benefactors to the human race, and make them content with the less thorny, but surer paths of *Theosophy*.

PARABOLANUS.

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# THE POSSIBILITIES OF SCIENTIFIC PROPHECY.

THE statement that prophecy is founded upon knowledge seems hardly the truism which it is, so accustomed are we to regard it as something based upon the miraculous. The more extensive and accurate our knowledge of the past, the more confidently we may predict the future. Science, as yet, has no way to peer back into vanished ages and perceive those tokens of their existence which, in combination, would serve as keys to unlock the gates of the future; but, by close and systematic observation and recording of the facts of the present, thousands of its trained disciples are founding therewith a past which will be of mighty potency to this end.

The oldest form of scientific prophecy known to us is that by which astronomy unerringly predicts the movements of the heavenly bodies; showing us exactly where they will be thousands of years hence as well as where they were thousands of years ago.

By a patient recording of the myriads of facts whereby Nature manifests herself, we are tracing more and more clearly the laws through which she operates. The science of meteorology is rapidly establishing itself upon an exact prophetic basis. It is but a few years since the system of weather-predictions was established by the Government of the United States; the electric telegraph, penetrating to nearly all parts of the vast area of the country and the regions adjacent, making possible the accumulation of numerous data bearing upon the state of the weather at various points, as recorded by a series of simultaneous observations. The character of the weather is thus indicated in general outlines for a day, or more, in advance, and warnings of notable changes are occasionally given several days before they occur. These weather predictions are already of immense economic value, and, as the meteorological laws upon which they are based become more accurately known, the future may be covered to a further extent, and mistakes will continually grow less frequent.

A few years ago Professor N. S. Shaler, in one of those brilliant papers which he has the gift of making entertaining as well as edifying, advocated that there be instituted under Government auspices elaborate and permanent observations of the Gulf Stream as it sweeps through the comparatively narrow channel between Florida and Cuba, with a view to ascertain its variations in volume, etc., from year to year. This would be an indication of the amount of heat

received by the earth from the sun in a given twelvemonth, the quantity varying, as he holds, considerably in different years. The climate of a large part of the earth depending upon the influence of the Gulf Stream, there might in time be accumulated a sufficient amount of data to enable the prediction of the general character of a season; whether it would be mild or severe, warm or cold, a year in advance. Professor Shaler would, of course, find other existing factors, by their interaction, materially modifying the influence of the one set under consideration. But these other factors, in turn, would by degrees be finally determined, so that the desired results might be reached with considerable accuracy.

Observations thus far made indicate the existence of cyclic laws governing the rainfall in various parts of the world, the amount of precipitation increasing and diminishing with apparent regularity in successions of wet and dry years. If there really be such laws, patient observations over a sufficient period, and extent of territory, will bring them to light. We may assume that, through systematic observations of this kind, made in all parts of the globe, meteorology will eventually become a science so exact that the course of the weather may be predicted for a year, and even for years, with the greatest closeness and accuracy. A like future may be predicated for other departments of natural science. Every scientist becomes a prophet in his own department in proportion to the scope of his knowledge.

There are indications that other occurrences besides meteorological changes happen in cycles. Should these indications have a substantial basis, it is likely that persistent research will discover the laws at their root. Starr King once told us about the "laws of disorder." Many of the most casual of newspaper readers have noticed how frequent it is that crimes and accidents of the same description occur at nearly the same time, and often in groups of certain numbers, as if the world were periodically swept by waves of influences governing such events. Some of the most learned of modern astronomers find ground for believing that the periodicity of the sun-spots is attended by certain phenomena upon the earth, such as the recurrence of wet and dry seasons, the spread of famine, pestilence, etc. May it not be that a faith in astrology has its basis in observations made by the ancients, extending over long periods—that the cycles in which particular classes of events occurred were coupled with certain aspects of the firmament. That accurate observation of natural phenomena is not a new habit, evolved by the European civilization of the nineteenth century, is shown by the remarkable astronomical knowledge possessed by nations of dim antiquity, knowledge which could hardly have been attained otherwise than by long and exact observations of facts and by deductions therefrom. The admirable calendar possessed by the Aztecs, immensely superior to the defective method of time measurement prevailing in Europe at the time of the conquest of Mexico, must have been based upon close scientific observation. Its possession hardly accords with the semi-barbarous character of the Aztec people. Possibly it may have been a heritage

from a high civilization. To trace the descent of knowledge which could have hardly had its origin otherwise than in scientific observation that seems ill-consistent with the low grade of culture prevailing among races possessing that knowledge, and vestiges of which are found even at the base of superstitous beliefs and customs, is one of the most important and interesting problems for ethnological research.

It may be said in general terms that the future may be predicted in the same degree in which we know the past; while, according to our knowledge of the present condition of anything, we may, to the same extent, judge what the past has been. Tyndall, in his lectures on "Light" gave fine expression to this idea in the words:—"Laying the theoretic conception at the root of matters, we determine by deduction what are the phenomena which must of necessity grow out of this root. If the phenomena thus deduced agree with those of the actual world, it is a presumption in favor of the theory. If, as new classes of phenomena arise, they also are found to agree with theoretic deduction, the presumption becomes still stronger. If, finally, the theory confers prophetic vision upon the investigator, enabling him to predict the occurrence of phenomena which have never yet been seen, and if those predictions be found on trial to be rigidly correct, the persuasion of the truth of the theory becomes overpowering." In the conclusion of the same lectures, Professor Tyndall relates a remarkable instance of such prophecy. The late Sir William Hamilton, taking up the theory of the polarization of light where Fresnel had left it, arrived at the conclusion that at four special points of the "wave surface" in double-refracting crystals, the ray was divided, not into two parts, but into an infinite number of parts—forming at these points a continuous conical envelope instead of two images. "No human eye had ever seen this envelope when Sir William Hamilton inferred its existence. He asked Dr. Lloyd to test experimentally the truth of his theoretic conclusion. Lloyd, taking a crystal of arragonite, and following with the most scrupulous exactness the indications of the theory, cutting the crystal where theory said it ought to be cut, observing it where theory said it ought to be observed, discovered the luminous envelope which had previously been a mere idea in the mind of the mathematician." Another splendid example is that of Liebig, who, discovering an important law of crystalization, predicted to his students the achievement of a series of momentous discoveries in chemistry, which discoveries in chemistry were afterwards made in the exact order which the great chemist had given.

Turning from the assurance that the occurrences of natural phenomena may, with the advance of science, be accurately predicted, let us consider the possibility of applying the same principles to humanity.

Man is an organism so complex that it is hardly possible to consider, in their involved relations, all the factors bearing upon the career of an individual. Yet an experienced observer, given the requisite data concerning the temperament, heredity, and environment of a person, may gain a fairly trustworthy

idea of what his past has been, and what his future will be. If it were possible to attain an exact knowledge of the facts bearing upon a person's career, with the faculty of drawing correct conclusions from facts, we might look back into the past and forward into the future of that person with equal facility; we could perceive at once how his whole life-course may be changed by a call from across the street, a jog from a passing elbow, a turn of the head to the right or the left. To accomplish this result, however, there would be demanded an equal knowledge of the lives of all those who are brought into contact with this person; again of all affecting these others, and so on to the conclusion of the entire human race and all beings and things on and of the earth.

Were this knowledge possible, we might picture its source as an immense fabric of countless interwoven threads. Taking any one thread at any one point, by tracing it backwards or forwards, we should find through such a perfected faculty of deduction, at each of the innumerable points of contact with other threads, a picture of a certain moment in the life, past or to come, of the individual represented by that thread, and of all others represented by the intersecting threads. Let us bear this figure in mind.

Meanwhile, to follow out the line of thought upon which we have entered, we must change our field from the physical to the psychical plane. Possibly, however, we may be brought to see that there is no gulf lying beween the two; that there is only a shading off and merging, as in the prism one colour shades and merges into that which is its natural sequence.

We will first, however, note that whatever a man is to-day, he has become by sharing the individuality of his fellow men. All human progress—material, mental and spiritual—is based upon this fact. In a certain sense, therefore, each man is made up of all humanity—his predecessors and his contemporaries—and the degree of completion of the individual is measured by the degree to which he may have assimilated the experiences of others, as well as learned the lessons imparted by all things with which life has brought him into contact.

If there be planes of existence higher than that upon which we are living, they must of course be characterized by conditions quite different from those of our present life. One of the attributes of a higher plane is believed by many to be a sharing of consciousness among individuals; it is held that, in the progress of the soul, this condition approaches completion more and more, until the state is attained where individuality, as we usually understand it, ceases, the consciousness of the one becoming included in that of the many, while the collective consciousness of the many becomes that of the one. Considered in its true aspect, therefore, the attainment of this state involves not the destruction, but the illimitable expansion of the individuality. It is the becoming "one with God" of the Christian Bible, and it is the "Nirvana" of the Orient. Under this conception, the end is a state of omniscience, of which we, in our present condition, can have hardly the faintest comprehension.

The fundamental factors of a problem being given, the rest must follow of

necessity, just as the beginning of a thread placed in our hand argues the continuation of the same. Is there not a beginning, or at least a point of departure, to indicate that this state of universal consciousness may be something more than a mystical fancy, but a possibility with an evident basis of actuality? Even some of those who have hitherto most stoutly denied their actuality, now admit that investigations in the field of psychical research have shown the existence of the phenomena of "telepathy," or thought-transference. And, assuming the truth of this fact of mind acting upon mind through the agency of the will, more or less accurately and intensely according to circumstances, we have therein the example of a sharing of consciousness to a certain extent between individuals not in physical communication with each other.

Many materialistic scientists who have denied the possibility of this action have done so because they could conceive of no means by which a thing so imponderable as the mind could directly produce tangible results; or, in other words, how the operation of the brain of one person could by any possibility affect the operation of the brain of another without communication between the two by means of the operation of some one of the five senses. They have, however, not to go beyond the realm of their material science to find a key to the problem.

The universal ether, adopted as a hypothesis by which phenomena such as light, heat, and electricity may alone be satisfactorily accounted for, is now accepted by science as a really existing substance, inconceiveably more attenuated than the rarest of gases, permeating all things, from the densest solid to the extremest vacuum, so called, and extending through all space. The extreme divisibility of matter is also set forth, and in connection with the complicated activities of the atom and the molecule there must be subtle modes of energy not cognizable by ordinary methods.

A thing so inconsiderable as a piece of common wire has a magnetic field extending about it to an indefinite distance. An electric current sent through a wire stretched beside a railway track may effect a telegraphic instrument in a train twenty feet away, so that messages are transmitted to and fro with the same facility as if direct contact between wire and instrument were maintained. This is by the operation of that kind of electrical action technically called "induction." The magnetic field may be increased in the extent of its activity according to the force of the current sent through the wire. It might be called the "aura" of the wire. All things in which activity of any kind is in operation must, it may be seen, have their "aura" or sphere in which the force thereby generated may operate. For activity necessarily causes an expenditure of force, and as all phases of matter are conceded to be modes of motion, it follows that all particles of matter must be constantly producing energy in a greater or less degree, and consequently must have more or less of a field in which energy is manifest, and may be perceived according to the degree of its intensity and the efficacy of the means applied for its detection. Simply because no instrument has been devised that is susceptible to the action of a certain force, it does not follow that that force has no existence.

As we ascend in the scale of vital organism, the field of energy must naturally become more considerable according to the energy expended by the life-processes of the organism. It seems not unlikely that the sympathies and antipathies of certain animals and human beings may be accounted for through the different qualities of their respective fields of energy. Considering these fields as portions of the individuals whom they surround, it is evident that the centres of force comprised in animals or persons may come into mutual communication without near approach of their respective bodies, and thus exert an influence whose operation may not be perceived by the ordinary senses. Just as a person may feel the heat radiating from the body of another in passing, it is not unreasonable to suppose that the more subtle manifestations of energy may be exerting an influence perceptible at a greater or less distance by persons of acute sensibility. The fact has often been observed that there are persons who are made violently ill if certain animals chance to come into their neighbourhood, although there appears nothing tangible to the ordinary senses to tell that the objects of their aversion are near. Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes, in his last novel, finds the existence of the human "aura," or this field of energy, necessary to account for the strange antipathy of the hero.

An inert organism would not have much of a field of energy in comparison with an active one, and, just as the field of the wire is expanded according to the strength of the electric current sent through it, so the influence of the human aura, there seems reason to believe, may be extended and directed according to the will-force of the individual, either consciously or unconsciously exerted. At least, this appears to afford a good working hypothesis to account for the operation of certain phenomena of thought-transference which otherwise would seem exceedingly mysterious.

As the vibrations caused by the action of the human voice upon the transmitter of the telephone institute corresponding vibrations in the receiver, miles away at the other end of the wire, and as the vibrations of one musical instrument may be made to produce similar vibrations in another instrument that is in harmony therewith, so it may be assumed that the force made active by the will of an individual causes a set of vibrations in his own sphere of energy, and that these vibrations, through the medium of the universal ether, are transmitted to the field of another individual; if the latter be harmoniously receptive, similar vibrations would be established therein, thus transmitting the action of the brain of the former to the brain of the latter.

May not this account for the mystery of "mind-reading," and how one person, under certain conditions, may think the thoughts of another as if they were his own? After all, the transmission of thought in this way seems no more wonderful than is the transmission of speech along a ray of sunlight or lamplight, instead of over a wire, by means of the photophone (or perhaps, more properly, the radiophone) and through the mediumship of the same universal ether.

We may also conceive how it is possible that all individuals cannot in this

way affect the thoughts of other individuals, since all are not in harmony with each other, just as all musical instruments are not attuned to the same pitch.

It is difficult to comprehend the truth of the statement often made, that on a higher plane of existence time, as we understand it, is not—that there is neither past nor future, but that all is one universal now—until the idea of a community of consciousness as an attribute of that plane is grasped. Then its meaning may become clearer. We may perceive that under such conditions the mind is omniscient, seeing past and future in the present very much as we may behold a picture, unconscious of any difference in time in our perception of the various parts composing it.

A perfect memory would mean a perfect imagination, and if gifted with that power we could summon back the past and give it over again as vividly as though it were actually occurring. Thus the past may, to all intents and purposes, be made present.

That the great drawback to the operation of the imaginative faculty exists in the distracting influences of the senses is demonstrated by the recent elaborate investigations of the phenomena of hypnotism made by Dr. Charcôt and his colleagues in Paris, and by various other investigators. The hypnotic subject, withdrawn from these external influences, recalls most minutely past events which had, seemingly, been wholly lost to the memory for years; not only this, but the imagination is so exalted under these conditions that the subject seems to behold and experience whatever is suggested by the operator. It appears likely that the phenomena of dreaming are largely due to the involuntary workings of the imagination while we are released from consciousness of external influences. Could we voluntarily withdraw ourselves from the action of these external influences, it follows that we might dream, so to speak, while in the waking state; that is, that imagined things might to our normal consciousness seem to be realities. Is not all artistic activity—the work of poets, painters, sculptors, composers—due to the possession of this faculty to a greater or less degree, according to what we call the genius of the individual? What is known as creative power appears to have its source in the imaginative, or image-making, faculty.

If we, in our present state, could be conscious of all laws governing certain events, we might trace those events back to their sources or forward to their consequences, and frame a conception of the conditions existing at any given moment along the path followed. In a minor way, this is the method which the scientist follows with his special subject, and the fulness of his knowledge is according to the completeness with which be may adopt this course.

We may therefore conceive that if there exists the universal mind, knowing everything, it may with instant perception at once grasp the workings of all laws and trace out their paths of action, running swifter than light along any thread and along all threads in the great fabric of life, beholding the careers of all persons and things, ever conscious alike of all that was, all that is, and all that is to be.

This mode of perception is what we call intuition, and its source may, perhaps,

be defined as concentrated knowledge; the stored-up results of the experiences through æons of myriads upon myriads of individuals. Might not the faculty of intuition, therefore, be attained by the individual according to the degree in which he brings himself into harmony with the universal mind, thereby gaining the power to draw from its store that which he truly wills?

There are often manifested, in various individuals, what seem like abnormal faculties. How is it that certain persons have the gift of instantly solving intricate mathematical problems, giving the answer at a flash, as it were? Many of us have had the experience of jumping unerringly at conclusions, seeming to bridge over, in an instant, the gap ordinarily filled by an elaborate process of reasoning to reach the result. It may be that the reasoning is nevertheless gone through with, but so rapidly as to be imperceptible, like the operation of certain mechanical devices which accomplish by a simple movement results formerly reached only by a slow and complicated process of manipulation. What is known as instinct appears to be the working of the intuitive faculty; that marvellous instrument, the physical organism, having been trained by the activities of generations to respond with instant obedience to the needs of its operator, activities once consciously exercised having become habitual, by practice, and therefore automatic. May not the abnormal human faculties alluded to likewise be the result of experiences acquired by the individual—or that power which stands behind and above the physical instrument—if not in this life, then perhaps in some other? The person may not remember the processes by which he attained such knowledge, but he has the result of processes which must have been gone through with somewhere and at some time.

Possibly a hint of how this faculty of intuitive perception is acquired may be obtained from the history of a famous conjurer, who, in giving his experiences, told how, when a boy, a favourite amusement pursued by himself and his brother was to run past shop windows in the city streets, and then see who could best describe the number and character of the articles displayed therein. A marvellous facility was acquired by this practice; scores of various articles filling a window would be accurately described after a swift passing glance, and it is related how, after a look of a second or so into a gentleman's library, the conjuror enumerated every volume on the shelves! This shows the possibility of acquiring, in a measure, practically instantaneous perception.

There are facts that point to the existence of a mysterious law of perception which enables glimpses of the future, more or less vivid, to be caught by certain persons, and under which, to many others, coming events cast their shadows before in the shape of premonitions.

According to the testimony of those who have experienced them, such visions are distinct from common dreams in the vividness with which they impress themselves on the memory, not as sports of the fancy when reason has relinquished the reins, but as events which seem actually to occur in logical sequence, and which are afterwards realized. History has recorded many instances of such glimpses into the future, one of the most familiar being the celebrated prophecy of

Cazotte, who predicted with accuracy the fate which in the French Revolution would overtake various members of the brilliant company assembled with him one evening in a certain salon. The writer personally knows two gentlemen of high scientific reputation who have, in this way, beheld exact presentations of important moments in their lives, experienced years afterwards.

May not the operation of this law be accounted for by supposing the instance of natural conditions, akin to the hypnotic state, during which the individual mind, withdrawn from external influences, comes into harmony with the universal mind, sharing its consciousness?

Afterwards, through some contiguity of events producing associations of ideas similar to those by which memories are recalled, the material veil that hides the future is lifted for the moment, revealing some particular phase of that which exists in the universal mind, which, as we have seen, must behold all things, in the future as in the past, appertaining by association to the physical condition of the moment. It may be likened to the magical operation of some chance physical combination, or adjustment; as, by the casual bringing about of certain chemical combinations, results that seem marvellous, because hitherto unattained, are reached. It seems, in fact, to be the operation, under exceptional conditions, of the same general law of memory, all events being contained in the storehouse of the universal mind, whether to us they be past or future.

In the same way a more common phenomenon might be accounted for—that of feeling that one has experienced the events of certain moments before—generally moments of little consequence; and the experience quickly vanishes and leaves no trace. This explanation seems more rational and satisfactory than the ingenious but far-fetched theory of the unequal operation of double cerebration, devised to account for the same phenomenon.

In the present stage of the world's development it is, of course, well that these principles of prediction or prevision are not capable of universal application.

Like all other attainments of mankind, their possession as universal attributes of the race would have to be the product of gradual evolution. It may readily be perceived that their consequence would involve an organization of human institutions entirely different from anything which we may now conceive. Possibly, as the world ripens, the faculty of prescience may become an attribute more and more common to individuals. Appearing now to be hereditary in certain families, and more common with certain nationalities—for instance, as "second-sight" among the Scotch—it seems reasonable to suppose that in the gradual course of evolution it may extend to larger groups and even to entire races. As we may safely assume a time, perhaps less than a century distant, when the occurrence of a wide variety of natural phenomena may be foreseen for long periods with exactness, so there may ultimately come an epoch, untold ages hence, when the processes of intellection shall be resolved into intuition, and the faculty of scientific prophecy become the property of all humanity.

SYLVESTER BAXTER.

# THE FIVE ENEMIES.

IN the *Theosophist* of Nov., 1882, is printed an address to Madame Blavatsky, from the fifteen members of the Theosophical Society at Berhampore, India, wherein occurs the following sentence: "According to our Hindu teaching, five enemies, residing in every man, have to be overcome before he can be initiated; viz., Lust, Anger, Greed, Ignorance, and Vanity."

This is a remarkably condensed statement of the training upon which admission to the Mysteries is conditioned. I do not know that I have seen anywhere a more terse, clear, comprehensive, and rational summing-up of Theosophic education. There is far more in it than any one paper can unfold, and it is only purposed at present to expand two of the many thoughts therein.

The first is that these five qualities, considered altogether *in themselves* and without reference to them when acting upon other persons than the possessor, have no moral character.* "Lust" is as purely a physical matter as is hunger or thirst,† and the gratification of it, regarded abstractly, has no more a moral element than has the consumption of dinner. The moral element attaches at the moment when someone else is injured, or when a third person's rights are invaded. "Anger" is so far from being essentially wrong, that in some of its forms—indignation, for instance—it may have very high merit. The man who can look unmoved on cruelty, perfidy, injustice, or inhumanity is not a philosopher with an enviable temperament, but a being, whether philosophic or otherwise, having a defective moral sense, a callous heart, or an inadequate sympathy.‡ For the just punishment of liars and tyrants,

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* It is very doubtful whether these qualities or vices can be so considered. They either exist under all conditions and have a moral character, and, therefore, have to be reckoned with by humanity, or they are an illusion and do not exist. From the view of the "Higher Self," all such things, however abstract, have a moral bearing, not only upon any man, *per se*, but upon others as well, by magnetic elements of disharmony arising from the presence of the "Five Enemies," even under the guise of desire only. The author, in endeavouring to take a wide view of the subject has, at first, forgotten this fact. [T.P.S.]

† The physical act may be; not so the desire. It is impossible to divest man of his responsibilities and degrade him to the level of an animal, which is in the position asserted as regards the gratification of lust. The author, who at the end shows himself to be a Theosophist and a Transcendentalist, is here unconsciously urging a materialistic point which has too often been put forward as an excuse for the indulgence of vice. [T.P.S.]

‡ The author here is engaged with the old difficulty of distinguishing between and separating the "anger" directed against a wrong act from the anger directed against the doer of that act. But in either case "anger" is an "enemy," for it, and all the other "enemies," are emotions directed against the Harmony of Universal Brotherhood. [T.P.S.]

for the preservation of the finer sentiments, for the insistance that men in a community shall respect the rights of others, for the security of all that is sweet, and good, and wholesome, and safe in social life, a swift check to outrage is most necessary, and this is secured by nature's linking to the moral sense a moral impulse, adding, in other words, indignation to disgust. It is, I believe, a grievous mistake to suppose that Theosophy is flinty-hearted or mealy-mouthed, that it has not the delicacy to discern or the vigour to denounce violations of human rights, that it is indifferent to moral distinctions, careless in the chastisement of aggression, flabby in moral texture and feeble in moral nerve. It is sometimes so represented, and extremists have intimated that there are heights from which all actions in the plain below are sure to lose their colour, the good and the bad, the true and the false, becoming indistinguishable. It would certainly seem strange for the moral sense to fail in function at the very point where it had become most acute, and the very suggestion of such a thing may, perhaps, justify a touch of the indignation which they deprecate. There are times, then, when anger is a legitimate feeling, and the objection to it, from the moral side, arises when it is excessive in amount, misdirected in expression, and so a cause of injustice.*

"Greed," if we understand it as meaning "acquisitiveness," is only immoral when it seeks to gain others' property without fair equivalent. There is nothing wrong in large fortunes honestly secured. Indeed, the acquisitive instinct is not only the motive, but even the condition, by which social advance goes on. Political economy shows that the first steps in civilization begin in two things,—thrift in a worker, recognition by others of his right to his gains. More than this, it shows, too, that the best government is that which least hinders the citizen in his enterprises and most protects him in their results. Even the very spread of Theosophy is made possible by these principles, for, as one can easily see, it would soon be paralyzed if its members, together with their means, their books, and their printing presses, were subjected to the arbitrary will of a civil despot. Yet, of course, acquisitiveness receives a moral taint when it passes the boundary of justice, invades the equal rights of others, and becomes covetous, dishonest, venal.

"Ignorance" is too negative a quality to have immediate bearings upon second parties. It is simply the "not knowing," which is a personal matter, and though there may be moral issues where it is the consequence of sloth or wilfulness, it is in itself a mere negation.†

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* Which, being interpreted, means that mortal man is wiser than the divine *Law* of Karma. [T.P.S.]

† Only in appearance. Ignorance is the ignorance of Truth. Ignorance of the relation of man to his "Higher Self"; of his relation to other men. It is one of the most potent of the "enemies," for a single-hearted man would certainly do his duty if he only knew it. INTUITION, the voice of the Higher Self, is the only guide, and man has to develop the faculty of hearing that voice, if he would live the spiritual life and dispel the cloud of ignorance by which he is surrounded. [T.P.S.]

"Vanity" seems to have as its very essence a claim for the undue admiration of others. But if we leave others out of the question, it becomes only conceit; and if conceit is saved of its excess, and reduced to normal size and function, it becomes merely self-respect. Now self-respect is a virtue, not a fault, the powerful motive to truthfulness, honour, and rectitude, the preliminary to respect for fellow-men. Indeed, the loss of it marks an advanced point on the downward road. One of its most important missions is the insistance on individual rights, the withstanding that reckless defiance of others which so especially flourishes in communities based on equality, and which can never be checked, there or anywhere, until each man sees that the maintenance of what is due to him helps to insure the concession of what is due to all. In fact, any other policy results in allowing the turbulent, the pushing, and the selfish to trample on the equal rights of the more deserving, and thus to give latitude to the very characters which ought to be suppressed. Yet, here again, a true quality may become false when in excess, and a self-respect swollen to conceit will undoubtedly become vicious if it invades the domain beyond and demands homage from other men as vanity.*

From this analysis we see that the five qualities in every individual, reduced to their primal form and shut off from all operation on other individuals, are either purely negative or actually meritorious. Why, then, one may very well ask, are they antagonized by Occultism; and why were these Eastern disciples justified in the assertion that they have to be overcome before any man can be initiated? Can there be any good reason for repressing and excising functions which, under the above conditions, play a valuable part in social development and security, and the absence of which would ultimately reduce society to chaos?

To these questions there are two answers. The first is that the sphere of operations contemplated by this discipline is not general, but, on the contrary, is extremely limited. Occult Science is not here laying down a maxim in morals, or a universal rule for human affairs, or an aim to be pursued in every life, but an element in the training for one specific, highly differentiated, rarely-sought vocation.† Modes of life and social energies, entirely innocent or even laudable, are discarded in this training, not because they are believed trivial, or to bear any moral stigma, but merely because they impede progress on the particular lines the aspirant

* Vanity certainly arises from a false idea of one's relation to others. Self-respect, if it be true, is obedience to the dictates of the Higher Self, even without regard for others; for this depends on a Universal Principle, and therefore must be in accordance with Harmony and Truth. [T.P.S.]

† The Rules are the Rules of True Life; they enjoin what Humanity, to be true to itself, ought to do. Society and its customs are shams, and its best efforts and regulations are vitiated by its false basis and real untruth. Here the author's real views would be apt to be mistaken, for he seems to recommend the idea that Truth is only to be followed by a few, and as a special pursuit, instead of saying that all ought to follow it, while only few are willing or have the energy or strength. [T.P.S.]

has preferred. It is precisely here as with the contestant in athletic sports. During his preparation for the tests which are to determine his proficiency, he renounces not a few of his ordinary habits. His food is restricted in variety and amount, his pleasures are curtailed in certain directions, his exercises are made regular and in every way systematic, his whole regimen is conformed to the rules experience has established. It is not pretended that these things have any merit in themselves, or that they contain or exhibit a moral element, still less that they are a pattern for the world at large. The only claim is that, for the particular end in view, for the one sole purpose to which they have any application, they are the condition of success.

For precisely analogous reasons are the candidates for initiation subjected to certain discipline before they are subjected to the trials which are to decide whether it has been effective. Such candidates are in an exceptional position. As with the physical, so with the spiritual athlete. Neither says that bodily pleasure is sinful, that a business career is unworthy of pursuit, that his own aim should be that of every fellow-being, but only that, this aim being the one most attractive to him, he prefers to part from the habits which are incompatible with it rather than part from the aim itself. He gives up that for which he cares less, to gain that for which he cares more. This is, indeed, only another case illustrating a universal law of life. It is impossible to have all things, especially if opposed. One cannot acquire learning and yet enjoy a repose fatal to its acquirement; one cannot reach any elevation without efforts which are always irksome and sometimes painful. And however innocent, or even meritorious, may be the habits irreconcilable with any desire, they have to be relinquished if the desire is to be secured.

This being so, there yet remains the query why the five qualities we are treating of require repression. Remembering still that we are now looking at them in their normal condition, and also as excluded from any bearing on other parties, the reason seems to be that they are relatively lower faculties which in the process of Occult development need subordination to the higher. We are told that Will is a symbol of Deity; that it is the very essence of the individual or Ego; that, seated on its central throne, it must control all the outlying departments of man's being, having each within instant and absolute obedience. Hence there can be no order, no precision, no promptness until its dominion is secure from all revolt. And as not only the Body, but the interests rooted in it, and the Mind, with all its faculties and functions, and the very Soul, rich in emotions and impulses, are all without that middle chamber of the Will, they must be brought under its sway and subjected to its rule, till at last the whole complicated nature obeys the one Sovereign, moves harmoniously with the one impulse.

It is now easy to see why the five qualities must, at this stage, be considered as enemies until they are entirely overcome. *Lust*, that most potent of all passions, would, by its perturbations, its memories, its imaginings, paralyze every effort after meditation or spiritual insight. *Anger*, not necessarily excessive, gives, in every grade, a quiver to the system which disturbs the delicate workings of the Higher Self. *Greed*, merely as acquisitiveness, emphasizes the personality, seeks its honour, or enrichment, or power, calls the very forces into play which are most hostile to altruism, elevates the standards which Occultism avowedly deprecates. *Ignorance*, even as the mere negation of knowledge, still more in its wider sense of incapacity for spiritual vision, unfits at once for any intelligent effort, any wise exertion. *Vanity*, only as self-esteem, is yet a form of self-hood, and no such form is consonant with a system which breaks down partition-walls and lets the universal currents flow without restraint. Unless, therefore, these forces are bridled, they may run away with the chariot; and unless the reins are held by a firm hand, they certainly will.

It was said that there are two answers to the question why the Eastern disciples were justified in the language they used. The second appears in that language itself. They assert that the five enemies have to be overcome. *Overcome*, you observe; not extirpated, or annihilated, or even crippled. Indeed, the word "enemy" implies this, for civilized people do not butcher or massacre their enemies, but only subdue them. That is, they first establish the certainty of their superior power through victory, and then use it to guide and control the no longer resisting foe.

Similarly, it would seem, does the (Occult) Esoteric training treat the inner forces of the man. Under the surface, below their manifestations, down at their source, they are not bad. In one of his exquisite essays, "The Soul of Good in Evil," Frothingham, that master of language, shows how evil is a perversion, a misapplication, a misdirection of the essential good, that at its root there is a truth, distorted into a lie and an abomination at its far-off appearance. So with these enemies. The initial force has its uses. We have already seen some of these, and how they conserve the life of society. Yet there may be a deeper analysis, easy to the disciplined insight of the man approaching initiation, who thus can probe to their essence and take it as one of the treasures he is to use. Having *overcome* such forces in even their least gross manifestations, having made himself their master and secured himself against revolt, having nothing now to fear from clamorous passion or insidious selfishness, he may even draw forth and utilize the inner essence of that which in a mild form is damaging, and in a coarse form is disastrous. He has conquered that most difficult of all territories—Self, and therefore has a right to all of its contents.

So much for the first of the two thoughts to be handled in this paper. It has been of the five enemies in their somewhat rarefied state, considered apart from any bearing on other parties, and as respects their treatment by an advanced student nearing initiation. They undoubtedly have, however, more interest to us in their ordinary manifestations, in their action and re-action around, and as matters with which we, who are not advanced students, have to deal. It is understood that all Theosophists, as such, are desirous to progress. Now if, in a sublimated form, the five enemies are the conquest which the would-be Initiate has to make, it would seem that, in their present grosser form, they are the field wherein the would-be Chela has to strive. It would seem, too, that the struggle must begin with the grossest form of all. Now, this is evidently an invasion of the rights of others. Every time, then, an aspirant perceives an impulse to sensuality, wrath, selfishness, thoughtlessness, or self-assertion, which would carry him across the boundary of his equal privileges with his neighbour, he is supplied by Nature with an immediate opportunity for asserting the strength of principle. You may say, indeed, that respect for others' rights is no more than what is demanded from any person of proper feeling. This is true; but it is to be remembered 1st, that the number of such persons is everywhere small; and 2nd, that no man will be a good Theosophist until he first joins it. It is in the small details of social life that his membership is shown. It may seem trivial to say that a man who blocks the platform of a street-car, or talks during an opera, is an invader of others' rights, yet such is the fact, and, it being a fact, we may therefore assert that he is not a real Theosophist. The principle involved is the same as that in a large business operation or the policy of an empire, and the clear-headedness to perceive this and the persistence in acting on it are part of the initial outfit of him who is to contend. In truth, until a full recognition of the rights of others is a permanent, unvarying, inflexible, almost unconsciously exercised habit to any man, he may have a sentimental interest in Theosophy, but he is not a Theosophist.

Nor is this, when it has been attained, all. The five enemies, in their next lesser form of grossness, are not subdued so long as they rule the man, and not he them. This is the stage where, though no one else is sacrificed, there is discontent at the absence of gratification. Now it is not possible to enjoy equanimity, and hence the condition for much interior development, so long as either the physical desires or those of the lower fifth principle cannot be quieted at will. Here we seem to find the area for the next contest of the mounting soul. It is not a question of morals, still less of the factitious moral system society adopts, but rather, generically, of that self-training undergone by a writer who teaches himself to compose among talkers, or

by a sickly person who learns to look unmoved upon dainties. It is a form of abstraction, by which the subject, collecting his finer faculties, ascends to a height above the coarser ones in their raging, and orders them to be still while he attends to his work. When he is able to do this at any time, and to do it effectually, he would seem to be ready for the step into the next area—the area referred to by the Hindu disciples as *before* initiation, and a slight sketch of which was attempted in the earlier part of this paper.

ALEXANDER FULLERTON.

# THEOSOPHY AS A GUIDE IN LIFE.

THIS is a practical age, and every system or theory is challenged to give proofs of what it may accomplish in action. How very little is gained by mere belief is the standing reproach to Churches. Their diversified Creeds have been steadily evolving through the centuries as new problems in theology or science arose, and to-day the separated sects have an outfit of every possible belief on every possible theme. No small proportion of these themes are in regions remote from practical life, as also from any means of proof. They concern such questions as the number and nature of Divine Beings, the character and bearing of the Divine Will, the fixedness of the future life, the best form of eeclesiastical sacraments, etc. —all of them with little facility of demonstration and with no utility when demonstrated. Moreover, it is quite evident that, whether there be One God or Three, whether He predestinates or not, whether evil-doers are damned eternally or temporarily, whether Baptism is efficacious towards pardon, the various sects have not made this earth more worthy of the Divine care or diminished the evils which religion should cure. As conservators of morals, abaters of sin, regenerators of society, Churches are assuredly a lamentable failure. It is not merely that society remains unregenerated, but that nobody now expects them to regenerate it. A copious provision of minute creeds has clearly done nothing to extirpate evil.

This being so, it is just as certain that the addition of another creed will not do so. The two classes interested in human progress are the philanthropic and the devout, and both, when any unfamiliar scheme for such progress is submitted to them, are sure to point out that mere beliefs have wholly failed. They say, with entire correctness, that not a new platform or Church is needed, but something with an object and an impulsion hitherto untried. If Theosophy has no better aim than have the sects, if it imparts no motive stronger than do they, if it can show no results more distinct and valuable, it may as well be rejected now as after a futile trial. But, on the other hand, if it holds out a better prospect and a finer spur, if it can prove that these have actually operated where conventional ones have failed, it is entitled to a hearing. The doctrinal question is subordinate, though, of course, an ethical system is more hopeful if upon a rational basis.

Let us see if the unfamiliar system known as "Theosophy," and which has lately received so much attention from the thinking world, possesses any qualities warranting its substitution for the religions around it. They have not reformed mankind; can It?

Now 1st.—*Theosophy abolishes the cause of all of the sin, and most of the misery of life.* That cause is selfishness. Every form of dishonesty, violence, outrage, fraud, even discourtesy, comes from the desire to promote one's own ends, even if the rights of others have to be sacrificed thereby. All aggression upon fellow-men, all attempts to appropriate their comfort, possessions, or plans, all efforts to belittle, outshine, or humiliate them, express the feeling that self-gratification is to be sought before all else. This is equally true of personal vices, as well as of that personal contempt for Divine authority which we may call "impiety." Hence the root of all evil conduct towards God, towards other men, or towards one-self is self-love, self-love so strong as to sacrifice everything rather than its own indulgence.

From this indulgence follow two things. First, the pains of envy, disappointment, jealousy, and all the mean and biting passions which attend the ever-present thought of self; and the utter loss of all those finer, gentler joys which are the fruit of beneficence and altruism. Second, the restraining measures which society, for its own protection, is obliged to put upon aggression in its coarser forms—the workhouses, jails, and gibbets from which no land of civilization and churches is free. And if we wish to realize what would be the effect of a universal reign of unselfishness among men, we may picture a land without courts, prisons, and policemen, a society without peculation, chicanery, or deceit, a community whereof every heart was as vacant of envy and guile as it certainly would be of unhappiness and pain. The root of universal sorrow would be eradicated, the stream dried at its source.

Now this is what Theosophy enjoins. Its cardinal doctrine is the absolute equality of human rights and the universal obligation to respect them. If my neighbour's possessions—of feeling, property, happiness, what not—are as much to be regarded as are mine, and if I feel that, I shall not invade them. Still more. If I perceive the true fraternity of man, if I am in accord with the law of sympathy it evokes, if I realize that the richest pleasure comes from giving rather than receiving good, I shall not be passively unaggressive, I shall be actively beneficent. In other words, I shall be a true philanthropist. And in being this I shall have gained the highest reach of happiness to self, for "he that loseth his life, the same shall save it." You say that this is a Christian text? Very well; it is also the epitome of Theosophy.

Then 2nd.—*Theosophy sounds ceaselessly the truth that every act of right or wrong shall receive its due reward.* Most religious systems say otherwise.

Usually they provide a "vicarious" plan by which punishment is to be dodged and unearned bliss secured. But if awards may be transferred, so may duties, and thus chaos is introduced into the moral order of the universe. Moreover, the palpable injustices of human life, those injustices which grieve the loving heart and sting the bitter one, are unaccounted for. All the inequalities and paradoxes and uncertainties so thick around us are insoluble. *Why* evil flourishes and good withers may not be known. Night settles down on the most important of human questions.

Theosophy illuminates it at once. It insists that moral causes are no less effective than are physical, and that its due effect, in harm or benefit, is infallibly attached to every moral act. There is no escape, no loss, no uncertainty; the law is absolutely unflinching and irresistible. Every penny of debt must be paid, by or to the individual himself. Not by any means necessarily in one life, but somewhere and somehow along the great chain is rigorous justice done; for the effect of causes generated on the moral plane may have to exhaust themselves in physical circumstances.

If unselfishness constitutes the method towards social regeneration, Karma—for such is the name of this doctrine of justice—must constitute its stimulus. Nothing fails—no good, no evil, can die without its fruit. The result of a deed is as certain as the deed. How can a system be unpractical when it abolishes every bar to the law of causation, and makes practice the key to its whole operation?

Then 3rd.—*Theosophy holds that every man is the framer of his own destiny.* All the theological apparatus of "elections," and "predestinations," and "foreordinations" it breaks indignantly to bits. The semi-material theories of "luck," and "fate," and "chance" fare no better. Every other theory which shifts responsibility or paralyzes effort is swept away. Theosophy will have none of them. It insists that we can be only that which we have willed to be, that no power above or below will thwart or divert us, that our destiny is in our own hands. We may perceive the beauty of that conception of the future which embodies it in a restoration to the Divine fulness through continuous purgation of all that is sensuous and selfish and belittling, and, so perceiving, may struggle on towards that distant goal; or self-besotted, eager only for the transient and the material, we may hug closely our present joys, heedless alike of others and of Karmic law; but, whatever be the ideal, whatever the effort, whatever the result, it is ours alone. No Divinity will greet the conqueror as a favourite of Heaven; no Demon will seize the lost in a pre-destined clutch. What we are we have made ourselves; what we shall be is ours to make.

Here comes in the fact of Re-incarnation. No one life is adequate to a man's development. Again and again must he come to earth, to taste its quality, to lay up its experience and its discipline, each career on earth

determining the nature of its successor. Two things follow: 1st, our present state discloses what we have accomplished in past lives; 2nd, our present habits decide what the next life shall be. The formative power is lodged in us; our aspiration prompting, our will effecting, the aim desired. Surely it is the perfection of fairness that every man shall be what he wishes to be!

Of all the many schemes for human melioration which history has recorded and humanity tried, is there one so rational, so just, so impartial, so elevating, so motived, as that presented by Theosophy? Artificial distinctions and conceptions are wholly expunged. Fanciful ambitions have absolutely no place. Mechanical devices are completely absent. The root of all separations and enmities—selfishness—is exposed and denounced. The inflexibility of moral law is vigorously declaimed. The realization of individual aim is made entirely individual. Thus sweeping away every artifice and annulling every check devised by theologians, opening the path to the highest ideal of religious fervour, insuring that not an item is lost in the long account each man runs up in his many lives, handing over to each the determination and the acquirement of his chosen aim, Theosophy does what no rival system has done or can do—affirms the moral consciousness, vindicates the moral sense, spurs the moral motive. And thus it is both practical and practicable.

Thus, too, it becomes a guide in life. Once given the aim before a man and the certainty that every act affects that aim, the question of the expediency of any act is at once determined. Is an act selfish, unfraternal, aggressive? It is then untheosophical. Is it conducive to unselfishness, spirituality, progress? Then Theosophy affirms it. The test is simple and uncomplicated, and, because so, feasible. He who would be guided through the intricacies of life need seek no priest or intercessor, but, illuminated with the Divine Spirit ever present in his inner man, stimulated by the vision of ultimate reunion with the Supreme, assured that each effort has its inseparately-joined result, conscious that in himself is the responsibility for its adoption, may go on in harmony, hope, and happiness, free from misgivings as to justice or success, and strong in the faith that he who has conformed to Nature and her laws shall be conformed to the destiny which she predicts for *Man*.

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# THE CURSE OF SEPARATENESS.

Nothing on this earth is single;
All things by a law divine
With each other's being mingle.
—SHELLEY.

"THE eternal unity of all things" was an elementary doctrine of the most ancient Eastern philosophies, and their final resolution into the universal soul was their ultimate hope and desire. "Destroy separateness!" says the modern Theosophist. "Cast out the self—the personality which is maya or delusion." "That they may be one as We are one" was the last prayer of Jesus Christ, referring to that transcendental unity of the Divine Trinity, as the ultimate goal whereto His followers should aspire. The modern nineteenth century man, to whom the light of the ancient wisdom is new and strange, asks with bewilderment what it all means, for race instincts inherited through countless generations, and all the course of Western education, from the cradle to the grave, tend to the development of the personality,* the glorification of self, and the accentuation of separateness. Nay, even our family affection, highest and purest of all our emotions, as we Westerns count it, is but a more refined selfishness, according to the tenets of the East. "He that loveth father or mother more than Me, is not worthy of Me," says Jesus, again, speaking in the Christ-spirit, as the manifestation of God and the universal soul, the union wherewith is our hope and our destiny.

The Oriental and the Hermetic philosophies are at one on this, yet it is hard for the mind to grasp; but when once the fact is realized that separateness, individuality, disunion, by whatever name you call it, is, in fact, the source of all evil, the key to every curse that broods over humanity, the root of every error, it will be found that in this one principle we have a key that will unlock many of the secrets and solve many of the problems which now perplex humanity.

That each individual man is an image of the whole universe, that within his soul is, as it were, reflected the microcosm answering to the macrocosm, which is universal, is a Hermetic axiom which Jesus enunciated when he said, "Behold, the kingdom of God is within you"; and even the unmethodized, unscientific

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* Meaning by this term the sum total of the qualities which separate one individual from another, and constitute what in popular language is called Individuality.

study of one's own inner self which the ordinary man can give, may furnish a clue to many important occult principles, if undertaken in a careful and honest spirit. Consider then, first, how the mechanism of the material body is carried on. Everywhere are nerve centres, and the mechanism of a centre involves first a sensitive surface; secondly, a nerve carrying the thrills of sensation received by that surface to the appropriate brain-cell, as a telegraph wire takes a message to headquarters; thirdly, a return nerve bringing back instructions, and fourthly a muscle, which, receiving these instructions, expands or contracts with a nicety of adjustment which no machine could equal. Many thousands of these pieces of mechanism are located all over the body, and so far, as above indicated, we can trace their functions, but how the message is received and the command transmitted from the brain-cell no science has ever yet been bold enough even to speculate upon; herein lies the life of man, and this is unity, the spirit which harmonites every sensation, so that "If one member suffers, all its members suffer with it; and if one member rejoices, all the members rejoice with it"; and if this unity be disturbed, if there be but the slightest separateness in any of the countless nerve centres, pain and disease follow as a matter of course; let there be from any external cause an excitation of a surface, the natural action of the nerves quickly recalls the blood and restores equilibrium; but if any failure of connection with "headquarters" prevents this natural action, there results a stagnation of the blood, followed by inflammation and rapid deterioration of the unoxidized blood, mortification and poisoning of the healthy blood through all the body, resulting from the separateness of one or more nerve centres; the fault may be in the centre itself, in the transmitting power of the nerve, or in the brain-cell which ought to send the orders; but wherever the fault is, it is separateness which directly causes pain and disease and death in the material body, and if the whole were harmonious there could be no such things. Here, then, is one result of the fall of man, or, in other words, the descent of the spiritual into matter; for if the spiritual entirely dominated the material envelope, as it did before the fall, no separateness, no pain or death could be possible. And what is thus true of man's material body is true also of other things. Needless to say that precisely the same remarks hold true of the material bodies of animals, and it needs but little extension of the principle to see that it applies to plants as well. Many would probably be startled at the bare notion of a brain in connection with a plant; but those who have watched and studied the motions of the sensitive radicle-tip, varying according to circumstances, and the corresponding development of the plumule, the motion of the currents of protoplasm, and the general phenomena of growth of every plant, from the lowliest moss to the most stately oak, must admit that there is a unity, and a harmony of principle about it all, which can only be satisfactorily accounted for by the theory of a central authority, receiving messages from the remotest portions and transmitting orders accordingly. Any particle which is not subject to that central authority is dead, so

far as the life of the plant is concerned, even as a leaf, when the connection of the veins with the sap veins of the stem is severed, may retain its form and its glossy appearance, may even put on hues of exquisite beauty; but the curse of separateness is on it for all that, it is dead, and its entire detachment and disintegration is merely a question of time.

Now, go lower still in the scale of creation. If we pick up a stone, it seems utterly separate, and, by consequence, utterly dead, yet when we drop it, it returns too by the force of gravitation to its parent earth, showing that it too obeys a central authority, and that entire separation is wholly impossible; for by this central law at all events, even though there were no other at all, the whole universe and all the expanse of the starry heavens are held together.

Thus far, then, it would seem that entire separateness is impossible, that partial separateness brings pain, disease and death, and that the destruction of separateness, the final reunion, is hope and joy and peace; the Nirvana of the Buddhists, the eternal hope of the Christian; and this is worked out through all the material creation, for the higher we get in the scale, the more plainly do we see strivings after a more and more perfect and universal union. Even among animals, the union and concerted action of the higher types is well known, as in a bee-hive, an ant-hill, a rookery for example, or in the manœuvres of a herd of wolves circumventing some antelopes; in all these the sinking of self for the benefit of the community is most marked. Or, leaving these higher types, the union of families among animals, though resulting in the first instance from the separation of the sexes, is an effort at reunion; the pairing being, by Nature's law, an effort towards the primal masculine-feminine type, the re-attainment of which would remove all that great series of separatenesses arising from sexual causes, lust, and jealousy and desire, among animals and among men in whom the animal nature is predominant.

Looking next at the race of men, even the very lowest are grouped in colonies, tribes, clans, nations, separateness is impossible, and the higher we get in the range of civilization, the more complex and intimate does this union become, and the clearer grows the analogy of the community to the individual man. The primitive savage has but his bow and arrows,—his squaw and his children represent the group with whom his life is shared; but even he owes an obedience to his chief, a comradeship to the rest of his tribe, which he cannot lay aside without suffering and loss. The most civilized nations of the West carry on their government by an analogy wonderfully close to the life of an individual man. Like branching nerves, the electric wires radiate from the central seat of government, where various departments like brain-cells receive intelligence from remote parts, and transmit orders in accordance with the one central informing will, which may be embodied in the person of a despot, or may be vague and indefinite as the representatives of the people, but is the central will for all that; railways and steamers, like veins and arteries, take the raw material, or the manufactured product, to feed, to clothe, or to strengthen every part alike; wherever there is

separateness or the action of any part against the will of the central authority, there is crime and trouble and wrong. It may be that the central authority itself is too weak to hold the out-lying parts together; it may be that the central authority is itself smitten with the curse of separateness, which is the case when a despot governs with motives of self-seeking, and not for the people's good, or where the expression of the popular will means mob law and the dominion of the ignorant masses by brute force. But from whatever cause it proceeds, the part which is not subject to the central authority, which does not sacrifice self for the general good, is smitten with the curse of separateness, and unless a speedy remedy can be found, is in danger of decay and death. What is true of a nation is true also of every other body or community, and more especially of a religious body or church. One of the leading doctrines of Theosophy is the great underlying abstract truth which is the common basis of all the great historic religions, and which all more or less imperfectly represent, the imperfection being caused by the imperfection of man, which again arises from his selfishness, his materialism, the results of his fall, in a word, his separateness. This blurs and distorts the great truths which, but for this, he would see clearly and know perfectly. Every Church, every religion, every faith in the world is founded on this underlying basis of truth, and is in actual living connection with it, otherwise it is dead, and though the outward form of a body remains, it is as surely doomed to disintegration as a leaf that no longer draws sustenance from the parent stem. The individual members of that body are not necessarily separate; like the molecules that form the leaf, they are drawn to other connections, as gravity brings the leaf to the ground, and other natural forces reabsorb it in mother earth; but the separate existence is over, as a leaf, or as a separate religious body, and thus separateness carried on to its logical result tends always to the destruction of separateness and to the affirmation of union.

Between the different great religions of the world again, so far as they reflect or manifest the great central truth, all are true, all are similar, showing but divers facets of the same grand whole; but when they differ (which difference is manifest, not in affirmation of apparently divergent truths, which may, nevertheless, be transcendently harmonious, but in their denial, denunciation, and intolerance of each other), then clearly the curse of separateness is on them, and both are wrong. Nothing, then, can rightly be denounced but denunciation, nothing denied but denial; we should only be intolerant of intolerance, and thus the ultimate unity may be promoted and the curse of separateness removed. The brotherhood of humanity is an aim of Theosophy, yet it is but a first step, its final results must be universal oneness—union with the universal soul, which is not a loss, but a transcendent expansion of consciousness, wherein the fetters of the self fall off.

Meantime all that hinders or obstructs the brotherhood of humanity is wrong, and tends to continue the curse of separateness. The member of one religious body who denounces or denies the doctrines or teaching of another proves

thereby that he loves the community that he belongs to more than the universal brotherhood, and is accentuating the curse of separateness. What he may and should denounce is everything in the doctrines of that other, or of his own community, which is of denial, of protest, of separateness, this serpent he should kill out wherever and however he meets it. Occasionally we meet with faiths whose whole *raison d'être* is the denial of something believed or put forth by others; these have no vitality in them, save only the evil magnetism which is engendered by spite, malice, and antagonism. Destroy their denials and they will die of inanition; and such destruction is a good and holy work, for if they have any truth, any connection with the great living body, this will not be impaired, but strengthened and purified by the removal of the curse of separateness. It will be obvious that the Catholic Church, in denouncing the sin of schism, was, so far, following these rules, and endeavouring, with such light as was in her, to strive against separateness.

Finally, if any man from love of his family, or from love of his country, be tempted to deny, to denounce, or to contend, or even to lend silent support to those who do so, he is by that very action forming a group, to a greater or less extent antagonistic to the universal brotherhood, and therefore more dangerous, more hard to deal with, more thoroughly smitten with the curse of separateness than even the selfish individual. These family ties are holy and helpful, but when they take the place of devotion to the universal brotherhood and to the striving for final union, they become false and dangerous, just in proportion to their holiness. "He that loveth father or mother more than Me, is not worthy of Me." The love of father and mother, of wife and children are first helps, and almost indispensable helps to the conquest of self; but he who allows them to usurp the place of self, and to keep him from his striving after the eternal "peace of God," which is Nirvana and the final result of the At-one-ment of Christ, has set up a false idol and fallen again more completely than before under the curse of separateness.

J. W. BRODIE-INNES.

# MUTUAL AND INTERDEPENDENT ACTION OF KARMA AND FREE WILL.

*(A Paper read at a Meeting of the Cambridge T.S.)*

FIRST let me say, that I do not intend to hazard any conjectures as to the conditions of existence or being in what, looking at it from our present standpoint, we call the infinite past or the infinite future (we should rather style it all the infinite present)—but I wish to deal, so far as I am able, with the mutual action of Karma and Free Will, in shaping the destinies of each individual during his period or periods of existence in the human form, as we understand the word human.

This is but a very minute portion of the whole subject, but it is the only portion on which I feel myself able to concentrate any thought and to endeavour to reduce the results of that thought into words.

As the law of Karma is essentially the law of Harmony, we may assume that if a single portion of the whole subject is found to be perfectly harmonious, the remainder we shall find to be in perfect tune when our perceptions are sufficiently acute to form a judgment on the matter.

I have of course, no right to assume that all of you believe in the doctrine of Reincarnation, but in the limits of the present paper I have no time to deal with this subject, and must ask you for the nonce to assume its truth. I must again tax your powers of belief or credulity, as the case may be, by asking you to assume that our existence in the human form is like a huge wave or spiral, commencing from a height and descending, only again to reach a still higher position than the one from which it started.

This doctrine of Karma, roughly speaking, tells us that our actions and thoughts in the past, have determined our surroundings and proclivities in the present, as those in the present are determining the conditions of our future. This, however, is an erroneous method of explanation, because it would lead us to consider that the *present* formed a boundary between the past and the future, whilst in reality we have lived, are living, and shall aways live in the eternal present.

" Never the spirit was born ; the spirit shall cease to be never ;
Never was time it was not ; End and Beginning are dreams !
Birthless, and deathless, and changeless remaineth the spirit for ever ;
Death hath not touched it at all, dead though the house of it seems ! "

* * * * * * *

" Nay, but as when one layeth
His worn-out robes away,
And, taking new ones, sayeth :
' These will I wear to-day !'
So, putteth by the spirit
Lightly its garb of flesh,
And passeth to inherit
A residence afresh."

I may compare the effects of Karma to an endless rope, broken at no one point. This rope is composed of many strands, to which we may liken our varying thoughts, aspirations, proclivities, and actions, whilst the country over and through which this rope passes may well represent our surroundings. This simile is taken, as I have no doubt you at once recognise, from the units given on the subjects of Karma in "Light on the Path."

Now it seems to me incomprehensible that we should consider the force of Karma alone to act, for then how are we to account for the generation either of good or evil Karma, except from an outside cause? Or even granting this generation, how are we to account for the fact that evil Karma generating in the future unfavourable surroundings and proclivities, the individual who is subject to these does not necessarily go from bad to worse; and *vice versâ* with good Karma?

By the inexorable laws of Karma one bad deed committed, one evil thought harboured, brings in the fulness of time its sure reward. Evil generates evil, bad Karma brings still worse in its train. What shall become of the man who once does evil? The further he goes, the worse become his surroundings, his mental sphere more gross, his physical condition more and yet more unfavourable to pure, right growth, and *all* the inevitable results of that one false step. And yet after a time, something steps in, clears away the mist, and shows him the error of his way, his fatal blindness. Something gives him not only the strength but the desire to shake off his accumulations of evil, to leave the foul paths he has been treading, and force his painful way upward from the depths of falsehood and evil to the heights of everlasting truth. Even then the battle is not won; he has begun to generate good Karma; but that good does not go on and increase as one might expect. Even when all the old Karma is exhausted—that which was generated before the evil was recognised, and the right path desired and sought for—even when that is lived through, and the tangled threads smoothed straight, the goal is not won, heaven not entered; for humanity, so strong, yet so weak, a God, yet a little child, stumbles, and falls once more, and this time it may be to greater depths and darker ways than it ever did before; and so on, in endless repetition, until the good predominating, the suffering soul enters that peace beyond comprehension; or being utterly evil, yet not without some spark of the divine in him, he is cast down to the very beginning to try his fate once more. The theory of Karma alone, I say, does not meet such cases as these.

We must perforce seek for some other source of power whose action is mutual and interdependent with that of Karma; and these conditions we shall find fully satisfied if we turn to Free Will as that source.

Arjuna: "Yet, tell me Teacher! by what force doth man
Go to his ill, unwilling, as if one
Pushed him that evil path?"

Krishna:— "Karma it is!
Passion it is! born of the Darknesses,
Which pusheth him. Mighty of appetite,
Sinful and strong is this! Man's enemy

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"Sense, mind, and reason—these, O Kunti's son!
Are booty for it; in its play with these
It maddens man, beguiling, blinding him.

* * * *

"Govern thy heart! Constrain th' entangled sense!
Resist the false, soft sinfulness which saps Knowledge and Judgment!"

Remember the two assumptions with which I started, and note that I should deduce from the second, that man, in his progress in human evolution, must pass through every portion of the curve of the wave or spiral, that is, must pass through every phase of experience of good and evil alike, must, passing from spirituality, at first travel through materialism, only to rise to a higher spirituality beyond. And bear in mind that this huge wave or spiral consists of many smaller wavelets or spirals corresponding to man's existence in his different reincarnations.

Now, since the inexorable law is that we must pass over every portion of the curve of each wavelet, it follows that the man who passes directly down from the height of spirituality through materialism, only at once to ascend again, will have accomplished the journey in a much shorter time, and with much less toil than one who, descending into materialism, passes in a horizontal direction along the trough of the wave, thus saturating himself with materialism, and rendering a subsequent rise to spirituality all the more difficult, because he has got rid of the traces of spirituality which he carried down with him in his descent from the crest of the previous wavelet, and which would have assisted him in rising to the crest of spirituality again.

In like manner, one who remains at the crest of a wavelet when he should be advancing to the next, will find his spirituality degenerating into superstition; so that when he descends to the next period of materialism, he will be less able to cope with the conditions there, than if he had carried some trace of materialism with him from the trough of the last wavelet. Remember that there is a succession of wavelets, each with its crest and trough passing down from a spiritual wave crest to a material wave trough, only to rise to a more highly spiritual wave crest. Now, I maintain that it depends on a man's free will as to whether he decides to pursue the even tenour of his way, from crest through trough to crest, or whether he turns aside to linger in the trough, or on the side of the crest, or on the crest itself; when he should be passing on to the next wavelet. But as I have pointed out, his power to pass on his way depends in great measure on whether he carries with him sufficient spirituality from the crest, and sufficient materialism from the trough of each wavelet, to enable him to pass over the succeeding one with but little difficulty.

And this I take to be a roughly sketched idea of the working of Karma and Free Will. Or we may represent human existence as a passage from the high

brow of a mountain, down through successive rich vales and forests, barren plains and sandy deserts, over range after range of little hills, to a deeper and richer vale—or it may be a yet more barren plain – from which we rise, over a corresponding series of hills and vales and plains, to a higher mountain top than the one from which we first descended. And so it will be understood, how it is true that every man must pass through every phase of experience, but it needs not that he linger in the forests and enervating plains of vice, or on the unfruitful and bare hill-sides of superstition.

If he has any of these, he creates evil Karma, which will delay his future advance. Now if Karma alone had sway over him, he would continue in the valley or on the hill-side, where he had first turned his steps from the path, and his course would be in a horizontal direction along either of these, so that he would get left behind in the stream of human advance, and would eventually be blotted out of existence as having made no progress.

"There be those, too, whose knowledge, turned aside
By this desire or that, gives them to serve
Some lower gods, with various rites, constrained
By that which mouldeth them. Unto all such—
Worship what shrine they will, what shapes in faith—
'Tis I who give them faith! I am content!
The heart thus asking favour from its God,
Darkened but ardent, hath the end it craves,
The lesser blessing—but 'tis I who give!
Yet soon is withered what small fruit they reap:
Those men of little minds, who worship so,
Go where they worship, passing with their gods."

Perhaps we may here note, too, the parable of the talents, where he who had five talents was commended much for earning other five, he who had two, whose Karma, that is, delayed his progress, yet struggled on to make other two, whilst he who had one, whose Karma was still more hostile, refused to make any effort to progress, and was severely censured for his conduct. Mind, he did not destroy the talent, he only refused to use it to the best advantage.

We must bear in mind, that as we progress from one crest of spirituality to a higher one, as we progress from one depth of materialism to one on a higher level, the action of Free Will and Karma becomes much more powerful, and a very much smaller apparent divergence from the right path leads to more damaging results. It is hard to give rough instances of what I mean, but I will try to do so; the examples I give must only be considered as distantly approximating to the thought I would wish to express.

Take a blacksmith's blows on a rough piece of metal—one blow not so well directed as it should be, will not do much apparent harm; in the forging of a light steel chain a less mistake will do more injury, whilst in the manufacture of a delicate chronometer, the slightest mistake will ruin the whole watch. So in spiritual matters, a murder may weigh comparatively lightly on a low type of villain. In another individual who is more sensitive, a falsehood damaging another will weigh much more heavily, whilst in one whose conscience is more highly strung, an envious thought of another will create agonies of remorse.

These are but rough instances, but will perhaps suffice to explain my meaning.

Again, we must remember that each one's Karma is inextricably interwoven with the Karma of his fellow-men, and we are responsible in a measure for them, as they for us; nor must we roughly separate the strands of our rope from the strands of theirs. If we in the past have been instrumental in turning some fellow-creature from the right road it may be one whose Karma is more hostile than ours, and who was so all the more easily turned; we must not, when we see the right way, roughly bid them adieu, but strive to turn them with us, and only gently separate the strands if we find that our toil is in vain, not submitting to travel further astray, but endeavouring to the best of our ability to turn their strands with ours in the right direction; and let us remember that in benefiting them, we are benefiting ourselves, for we all are one with the Eternal. This view of the subject complicates the matter enormously, and is a question with which I do not feel in the least competent to deal.

I might compare the action of Karma to the progress of some vessel in a given direction, carried by a current, now sluggish and now swifter, whilst Free Will would represent the rudder, and to carry out the simile further, we may consider that at first the long beam is used for steering, requiring great apparent expenditure of energy to produce comparatively small results; then we have the wheel, which again requires some considerable expenditure of strength, though not so much as in the former case, whilst progressing further we have the small wheel acting through machinery where a very small effort will produce comparatively great results; and so we steer our vessel on its course, avoiding the whirlpools here, the cross currents there, taking the middle of the current when the stream near the banks is too sluggish, nearing the banks when the centre torrent is too rapid, ever on the look-out to avoid fouling other vessels, on the same stream of time, yet ready to lend a helping hand to one in distress, so long as we ourselves are not led into shipwreck by so doing; for we must remember that our vessel is a trust which we hold, and though by helping others we may delay our arrival in port, yet we have no right to risk shipwreck by so doing. Of course, the stouter the boat, and the better she answers to the helm, the nearer will she be able to approach danger in helping others; but the captain in each case is responsible, and must know perfectly the capabilities of his boat, and will be held answerable for all the incidents, both good and evil, of the voyage.

This simile again, as indeed all similes drawn from our present experience must be, is necessarily inadequate to meet the whole case, but will give some idea of the lines on which I think we ought to attempt to work out this question, progressing in the march of time to a nearer and nearer approximation of the whole truth.

"Know thou that Nature and the Spirit both
Have no beginning! Know that qualities
And changes of them are by Nature wrought
That Nature puts to work the acting frame.
But Spirit doth inform it, and so cause
Feeling of pain and pleasure. Spirit linked
To moulded matter, entereth into bond
With qualities by Nature framed, and, thus
Married to matter, breeds the birth again
In good or evil 'youis' (wombs)."

Then, as we rise to higher and higher states, we shall find that good Karma helps us on our way amazingly. We must, however, remember that good Karma does not necessarily rise from actions that seem on the surface to be good.

"The gift lovingly given, when one shall say,
'Now must I gladly give!' when he who takes
Can render nothing back; made in due place,
Due time, and to a meet recipient,
Is gift of 'Sattwan,' fair and profitable.

"The gift selfishly given, when to receive
Is hoped again, or when some end is sought,
Or when the gift is proffered with a grudge,
This is of 'Rajas,' stained with impulse, ill,

"The gift, churlishly flung, at evil time,
In wrongful place, to base recipient,
Made in disdain or harsh unkindliness,
Is gift of 'Tamas' dark; it doth not bless."

Benevolence! Freedom from the grosser forms of vice, a strong will to outstrip our fellows on the path to perfection—all these may have quite a contrary effect, unless they are simply spontaneous efforts to reach the light, as the plant grows upwards, and not strivings after reward and greater power to ourselves. Here Free Will comes in strongly in determining our reasons for attempting to progress. Is it merely that we feel our need for something further, that our aspirations lead us to something higher, until we return to oneness with the Eternal? Or is it a desire to outstrip our fellows, and sooner obtain the fancied reward? For this will make all the difference in the long run.

"Abstaining from a work by right prescribed
Never is meet! So to abstain doth spring
From 'Darkness,' and Delusion teacheth it."

* * *

"Whoso performeth—diligent, content—
The work allotted him, whate'er it be,
Lays hold of perfectness."

* * *

"Better thine own work is, though done with fault,
Than doing others' work, e'en excellently.
He shall not fall in sin who fronts the task
Set him by Nature's hand! Let no man leave
His natural duty, Prince! though it bear blame!
For every work hath blame, as every flame
Is wrapped in smoke! Only that man attains
Perfect surcease of work whose work was wrought
With mind unfettered, soul wholly subdued,
Desires for ever dead, results renounced."

* * *

"The doors of Hell
Are threefold, whereby men to ruin pass—
The door of Lust, the door of Wrath, the door
Of Avarice. Let a man shun those three!
He who shall turn aside from entering
All those three gates of Narak wendeth straight
To find his peace, and comes to Swarga's gate."

Let us trust that, as we ascend higher and higher, we may rid ourselves of the effects of Karma and pass finally back again into the full blaze of eternal light and truth, from which we emanated.

May we in time be able to say :—

"Trouble and ignorance are gone ! the Light
Hath come unto me, by Thy favour, Lord !
Now am I fixed ! My doubt is fled away !
According to Thy word, so will I do !"

NOTE.—The extracts are from the "Song Celestial," or "Bhagavadgita" by Edwin Arnold.

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# DIVINE HEARTACHE.

*(Reprinted from "The Theosophist" of June, 1887.)*

"Those who through heart and mind know Him thus abiding in the heart, become immortal."
—*Svetasvatara Upanishad*, IV. 20.

THERE has sprung up of late a certain class of Theosophists—whose number we hope is not large—who complain that though they have been Fellows of the Theosophical Society for several years, leading a moral life, studying the theosophical literature, and moreover, strict vegetarians, yet they see in themselves hardly any perceptible signs of spiritual progress, nor have they been able to attract the attention of the masters, much as they wished it. To such we say: All that you have been doing is well and good, and is sure to form a firm ground-work for future advancement; but we only regret you could not see for yourself the impossibility of negative virtues and mere intellectual culture, even when rightly directed, forming the direct instrument of the soul's elevation. An intellectual grasp of the broad truths of occult science is indeed indispensable as a first step, in so far as they acquaint you, however vaguely it may be, with what should be the aim of your precious life, and how you are to work in order to attain the end. But no one in the Theosophical Society, so far as we know, postulated the absurdity that a life of vegetarianism, coupled with the study of a few books would, like the magical slippers, transport you to the desired goal. If then you have been disappointed in the realization of hopes which you never cared to work for, you have nobody to blame but yourself; and unless you choose now to go beyond the vain acquisition of a surface acquaintance with uncommon technical names and metaphysical ideas—so "to look big and talk away"—the approach to the land of Mystic Rest must for ever remain barred against your advance.

Much of the difficulty seems to have arisen from the misunderstanding of the term *Gyan*—which, in Sanscrit works on occultism, has been called the sole instrument of *Mukti*—as signifying knowledge acquired on the intellectual plane and that only. From a similar misconception has also originated the deplorable ill-feeling that may be observed even to this day between the respective followers of *Gyan-marga* and *Bhakti-marga*. The *Gyan*, referred to as forming the means of *Moksha*, is *not* the mere intellectual understanding of scientific and philoso-

phic truths, but signifies the intuitive perception of the real, as distinguished from the unreal world of phenomena. Now it is difficult to see how one can attain this perception without having a *quantum sufficit* of what is called *Bhakti*, without being permeated, as it were, with a rapt devotion towards the God within—without paying "the profound obeisance of the soul to the dim star that burns within." It is known to all how powerful are the attractions of sense objects, and any amount of simple will-power will not be enough of itself to counteract the inherent tendencies of a myriad-fold existence, unless the will itself is strengthened and vivified by some higher impulse from the soul. No one has urged the necessity of *Gyan* more forcibly than the sage Sankara, and yet his enumeration of the means of liberation are *Shraddha*, *Bhakti*, *Dhyan*, and *Yoga*. On the other hand, *Bhakti*, unless properly directed, and controlled by right discrimination, cannot acquire the momentum necessary to push one beyond the attraction of the world of sense, and to carry one to the Supreme goal; as it will be evident on a little consideration that such a refined and spiritual force cannot flow with the same vigour when applied to material conceptions, as when directed to the pure Spirit alone. To us, therefore, *Bhakti* and *Gyan* in their true sense appear to be, if not two names for the identical subjective elevation that becomes the lot of spiritual persons, at any rate the two aspects of the same state, the one being the inseparable complement of the other.

It will thus be seen that spiritual development requires for its basis the cultivation of the heart rather than that of the head, although the latter *cannot*, as we have said, be dispensed with altogether. In the dreary journey of every man's life there come moments when, withdrawing from the lurid glare of the outside world, he sinks into the inmost depths of his soul, and here resting upon the bosom of Infinity, hears a voice speaking to him in soft and silent whispers:—"Child of the earth! the life thou livest is all a dream. Wake up to find thyself transformed into an angel!" And blessed is he that not only hears with a sense of passing delight, but has also the heart and strength to obey. But how is he to obey? During moments of exaltation we do indeed feel how delusive is the world in which we live, and how shadowy are our highest aspirations, our deepest sorrows and joys; but how are we to awake from our dream? The flow of the spirit descends upon us even as the "dew of heaven," unsolicited and unnoticed; how then, finite as we are, can we command it, and transforming its fitful gushes into a steady, constant current, cause it to break down the barriers of illusion and bear us to the reality beyond? Is there no end to this dream, no means of obtaining more frequent draughts of this Soma-juice? Surely there must be, since so many have safely crossed this ocean of delusion. Shall we try to suggest a mean? Thought, meditation, *Vichara*—herein lies the secret of success. Does not the thrice-great Hermes say that "without philosophy there is no lofty religion," and does not the Holy Sankara entreat you thus:—

*'Kasyatwam vá kuba áyata Tattwam chintaya adidam bhrata."*

"O, brother! meditate upon the truth as to whose you are and whence you come." Here is the path for you to follow. Develop thought—ponder day and night over the unreality of all your surroundings and of yourself, and try with unceasing effort to realize that underneath this array of phantoms there is an essence, unknown and unheeded in the tumult of every-day life, but nevertheless, the only Reality from whence has sprung all that has the appearance of beauty, of love and of joy.

Begin, then, by checking all thoughts that relate to the illusory life. Depend no more on the mercy of such noble and elevating thoughts as may chance at intervals to sweep over your heart. No appreciable change will be observed if you leave yourself to the help of such fortuitous advents of spiritual impulse. Look around and see how untiringly men have to work to obtain such trifles as have aroused their fancy. Think you then, that such a glorious result as freedom from the clutches of Death and Misery—supposed to be the inevitable companions of human life—can be attained without hard labour? Ah no! All your energies, active and dormant, will have to put forth their utmost strength before you can reach the end of your journey. Strive then, by concentrating the whole force of your soul, to shut the door of your mind to all stray thoughts, allowing none to enter but those calculated to reveal to you the unreality of sense-life and the Peace of the Inner World. You have to address your own soul in the words of the Prince of Denmark:—

"Yea, from the table of my memory
I'll wipe away all fond trivial records,
All saws of books, all forms, all pressures past,
That youth and observation copied there;
And thy commandment *all alone* shall live
Within the book and volume of my brain,
*Unmix'd with baser matter.*"

We have often felt that to a person turning towards the life of occultism, the springing up of evil thoughts is less injurious than that of idle and indifferent ones. Because as to evil thoughts he is always on his guard, and having determined to fight and conquer them, they help in developing his will-power. Indifferent thoughts, however, serve merely to distract his attention and waste his energy without imparting the slightest benefit. Avoid therefore carefully, all "fruitless thinking, thinking of possibilities, and contradictory thinking."

The first great basic delusion you have to get over is the identification of yourself with the physical body. The form of language in vogue in this material age of ours has much to answer for in this egregious error that has taken root in us. Even in childhood our susceptible nature is broken upon the wheel of this crushing blunder when we hear all around us sounds of "I go," "I come," and so on, when it is merely the physical envelope that is seen to perform the act. The ascetics of India are the only people who always speak of "*Sarira*" as distinct from themselves and thus take care not to mislead people into an erroneous belief. Consider within yourself, without being deluded by the false notions floating around you, and begin to think of this body as nothing better than the house you have to dwell in for a time, and then you will never yield to its

temptations. Wherein, dear friend, does the mass of flesh you are not ashamed to call yourself, differ from the tree in your garden? Does not the axe cut it, the fire burn it? Does it not wither and die even more rapidly? What better than the air and water that supply nourishment to the tree is the food you eat with so much relish? Ah! sad fate! amazing fall! you who are a God, yet revelling in the delight of flesh and blood! And lo! you are enamoured of this fantastically shaped puppet, and spend your invaluable life in decorating and clothing it in strange garbs, so that other puppets may bend before it. Answer candidly if this mere puppet-show is worth your life's devotion. Serve the body only if it helps you in serving your God; otherwise it were far better for you that it should perish and be scattered in pieces, than serve the purpose of creating a host of delusions to enslave you. Work for it never so faithfully, it will inevitably betray you some day; so take warning while yet there is time. Sink into nothingness all concerns about its comforts, and, awakening to the true object for which you are born, devote every moment of your time in advancing towards the centre of Light that is beckoning you from afar.

When you have in some degree realized the insignificance of the gross body, you will begin to doubt if the idea of self, which springs up almost entirely from the sensations derived from the body, is really your true Self. How can the world, in relation to which alone the false self exists, have any more reality or permanency than a dream, when there is absolutely no proof of the objective existence of matter apart from the cognizing mind? Analyze thus constantly the phantom to which you have given the name of self and reflect upon its illusory character. Try also with consistent attempts to conquer the prominent weaknesses of your nature by developing thought in the direction that will kill each particular passion. Are you home-sick? Then will you tell us, dear brother, what is it that attracts you? Is it the fond caresses and sweet speech of your relatives? Know you not that all your connection with the persons you regard as your own, arises from the body, and that even while you are enjoying their embraces, if the machine stops, they are the first to turn you out of doors? Cease then to love any forms of clay. You will not thereby be deprived of the only fire that makes life divine. Begin to love the Unseen Principle, set all your affections on him, and you will then bask beneath the Sun of Love from which at present only a few stray rays now and then pierce through the darkness of your heart. Be home-sick as passionately as you can, but let it be the true home that you long for and not a pile of bricks. Again, are you sensitive to the injustice and vile slanders of people around you? Then ask yourself why you suffer. Is it not wholly due to your own actions, and would you not have suffered as certainly and as bitterly if the person against whom you are irritated had never existed? Why then indulge angry feelings against the unfortunate person who has merely formed the instrument of the Law? Pity rather the poor mortal who has thus added to the heavy burden of his sin. Pray heartily for the erring brother that the iron will of Karma, which never stops, may not grind him utterly

to dust. This you can do only by having a firm faith in Karma. Thus, on serious thought, all weakness will be found to arise in some error; use head and heart to drive it out.

Your first efforts in this direction, however, are likely to prove discouraging. Not only will you be unable to observe any signs of development, or to feel any nearer the spiritual Light, but on the other hand you will find yourself sinking under such a deadweight as will make you stagger, and doubt if it will ever be in your power to lift it up. Your incipient efforts have now detached you from objects of sense only in so far that you cannot take anything like your original delight in friends, relatives or amusements; but they have not yet supplied you with the true ambrosia that can not only fill their place, but absorb your whole being into itself; you begin to feel a sort of *indescribable* vacuum in your heart—we say indescribable, because nothing akin to that painful blankness is felt even in the saddest moments of worldly life. Particularly will this terrible monster of hollowness oppress you when you wake up from sleep; because on the dream-plane you will find yourself attracted to and made happy in your former delights; but as soon as you open your eyes, you find yourself, with a suddenness that takes your breath away, transplanted into a land of nameless horror, where there is nothing that can give you a moment's pleasure. The very fountain from which you now and then received refreshing draughts of the elixir seems to be dried up for ever, and for some time you walk upon the earth a disconsolate being under a grim shade, without one ray of hope or joy to cheer you. Here it is that the poor souls that are not firm-footed, stumble. But you, noble aspirant—you who would fain enter the sanctuary of truth—Despair not! Doubt not! Falter not! beloved of the sages—for here it is that glorious saints are waiting with cups of infinite bliss for you, will you but take one more step undismayed.

There would be greater reason to doubt the law of expansion by heat (because certain organic substances contract by heat, owing to the moisture they contain), than for you to doubt the final expansion of your soul because of the apparent contraction you may be experiencing. Know you not it is but the driving out of the rheum and the filthy moisture of your heart. Regard this shade, then, as the soft twilight heralding the rise of the sun of *Ananda* (spiritual bliss). Pursue your determined course with undaunted courage and the clouds will break. The weight under whose pressure you had all but succumbed, will then be lifted up, and your heart will spring back into the free air with an elasticity unknown before. Once more the life-imparting stream of your soul begins to flow, but it is more continuous, and its waters more tranquil and pellucid. Once more you are blessed with "angelic visits," but not "few and far between" as before. Remember, that sadness is by no means the unmitigated evil it is supposed to be, and that there is a limit to the pain caused by it. When that limit is passed you enter quite unexpectedly into a region of unthought-of beauty, just as a ray of light is refracted or broken until the critical angle is reached, after which refraction gives place to the perfect reflection called "*total reflection*,"

Bear in mind that sadness has two stages. First, the *painful*, which is almost the only one known to the ordinary material man; and second, the *serene*, into which the first gradually merges in the case of comparatively pure persons even as calm follows storm. In fact, on surviving the first terrible blow of despondency, you will learn the novel lesson that sadness is not after all the fabled vulture devouring the heart of Prometheus to eternity. You will no longer dread it and fly impatiently from it, but will try to use it as a ladder to ascend to the clear sky. You will recognise it as the shadow of the Light that shines beyond. It is only in the Cimmerian darkness of all-absorbing material occupation that there is neither light nor shadow. Sometimes when the serenity of your soul will be marred by some worldly engrossment, sadness will prove a welcome guest—nay, you will yearn to fly to it for refuge, so that it may infuse into you the calm of a life the busy world knows nothing about, and for which your heart pines. You would much rather have your soul drowned in the sweetness of melancholy, than lost in the noisy hubbub and meaningless laughter of what is called social life. Brother! do not hastily turn round and say: Would you then deprive man of his sole delight, the capacity for laughter? No, indeed! We are only suggesting the replacing of mimicry by reality—by that centre from which radiate beams of cheerfulness not only lighting up the gloom of men, but piercing to the very heart of the earth. Laugh, then, the laugh of the Spirit, if you can, otherwise keep silent. "Silence is golden," is an old saying, but if we may be permitted the liberty of altering it a little we should say, "Silence is the philosopher's stone." Ordinarily it is golden, because it is of the greatest use to us even in our ordinary dealings with men, but when directed towards the contemplation of the Supreme, it becomes a true philosopher's stone. All objects which *then* come within its influence instantly borrow its charm, and reflect a beauty so exquisite that we feel as if everything around us had suddenly changed into something brighter and nobler. Silence, therefore, is essential for the neophyte. When, however, it proves oppressive—as it will sometimes—then talk if you will, but talk, as far as may be, only on subjects allied to what you have made the aim of your life. When the mind is fatigued by continuous meditation, or when it is rambling, books on spiritual subjects are of great help, but much depends on your selection of such books and how you read them. Your object in study should not be, as is usual with men, a confused mixture of obtaining a tremendous amount of information, and of finding a sort of sedative amusement for the intellect. You should have a well-defined purpose in view—and need we say what that should be? Surely none other than to achieve that which you have made your life-effort—Soul-elevation. You must, therefore, read little and think more, in order to "feed the flame of thought." Give up all desire of turning into a *gourmand*, devouring a heap of sundry books. Oh! how gladly would we part with a whole library of books for one such invaluable gem as the *Bhagavadgita*, *Light on the Path*, *The Idyll of the White Lotus*, or *Sowing and Reaping*. With one such book in your hand, ponder well till you find yourself absorbed into the Spirit of Truth. "Read to live, and do not live to read."

A general complaint that often reaches our ears is that one is not placed n circumstances favourable for progress, and that much as one desires to live and work for the higher life, there are embarrassments that make it completely out of his power to advance, even a single step. How deeply such a person laments his peculiarly harrowing strait, and how vainly he thinks he would attempt and succeed in living the life of the soul, were he better situated. We say to such persons, you are but throwing away the energy of your soul in foolish lamentation, and cheating yourself with fine imagery as an excuse for negligence and want of determined effort. Firstly, you who are acquainted with and believe in the law of Karma, ought to know that favouring circumstances are the result of hard work in a previous incarnation, and not the offspring of the injustice of a blind destiny. Sri Krishna says that only those who have worked up to a certain point in occultism in one life are blessed in the next with surroundings suited to soul-growth. Why, then, complain for not having what you do not deserve? And unless you determine now to create better circumstances for the future, you may go on idly wishing for a change in which you please yourself with the belief that you will thrive; but be sure that nothing is attained without working for it. Surely the beginning must be made somewhere, by controlling circumstances and by working up to a certain degree, and *then* you can hope for and obtain surroundings calculated to assist your efforts. Then again, you should begin to realize that the circumstances under which you are placed can obtain no mastery over you, unless you deliberately put your neck under the yoke. The surroundings, however manifold, have no inherent power in them to distract your attention from the one star that is the guide of your life unless you voluntarily give them the power. Even a school boy knows that a quantity, however large, if raised to the power zero gives unity as the result. So you should constantly deny to all outside objects the slightest power over you, and then, though their number be infinite, you will see nothing but unity. It is merely your own desire that restrains you from soaring high. The fact is beautifully illustrated in Indian books by the way in which monkey-traps are made in that country. A quantity of gram is placed in an earthen vessel in which there is a small opening, just large enough to let the open palm of the monkey pass in. When he has closed his fist, having a handful of gram, he cannot take it out. If he only lets the gram drop, he can with the greatest ease run away and be free. But no! The attraction of the gram so bewilders his sense that he begins to think himself a captive and is thus caught. Exactly the same is the case with man; there is nothing to bind him to slavery if he can but see through the folly of unchecked *Vasna* (desire). It is your own weakness that is forming the obstacles for you. There is positively nothing outside of yourself that can in the least hinder your progress.

There is, however, another truth that has to be so learnt and assimilated as to form a corner-stone of your belief. You have to understand that the aim of nature being identical with your own, all that you, in your ignorance, call sufferings and obstacles, are in reality the mysterious efforts of nature to help you in

your work if you can manage them properly. An idea of how Karma is a never-failing aid to evolution can be gleaned from the consideration that resistance always develops the Will-power. The mental height and quiet that has been attained by overcoming obstacles, form a guarantee of our having advanced some distance, and give us the assurance that it is no fungus-growth, destined to live but for a day. *Moksha* being another name for perfection, requires that you should have experienced all phases of existence; hence you should look upon all circumstances with the gratitude of a pupil. All complaint is a silent rebellion against the law of progress. An occultist's object being to hurry on the work of evolution, if you complain you will, instead of reaping any benefit thereby, retard your progress. Leaving all complaint aside, devote yourself heart and soul in the work of helping the growth of your soul. All disturbance of equilibrium is prejudicial; bearing in mind, therefore, that there is but one pivot in the universe on which equilibrium can be restored, detach yourself with effort from objects of sense, and fix your heart on the Supreme Unity. Equilibrium, however, is of three kinds, on the mental as well as on the physical plane. First, unstable equilibrium, in which if the mind is disturbed ever so little, it turns away the more forcibly from its position of rest. This is the nature of the devout feelings that incidentally fall to the lot of the man of the world and which are next to useless for an occultist. Second, neutral equilibrium, in which there is no active tendency either way, and the mind is occupied either in sublime thoughts or in objects of sense. This is a distinct step no doubt, but you must not rest satisfied with it, but should strive to attain the third—stable equilibrium. At this stage, however busy a man may be in the performance of his material duties, his heart for ever flies from them to attain calmness and peace. So our final advice is, that all duties should be performed conscientiously with the conviction that their avoidance, instead of being a help, is sure to prove an obstacle. At the same time never forget for a moment that the aim for which you work is not what your hands are plying for. Ever take care not to be so attracted by work as to lose sight, even for a short time, of the magic charms which your soul reveals. Love solitude with all your heart and enjoy it whenever you can afford to fly to it. Imagination is of the greatest help in the elevation of the soul. You will realize its power only when you apply it to a distinct end under the command of your will. Retire to a secluded spot—the bank of a river or a solitary grove if possible—and call up spiritual scenes before your mind's eye, and in thought lose yourself in the supreme self. Dreaming is supposed to be an odd and foolish habit in this matter-of-fact, practical age of ours. Hardly is it guessed that dreaming spiritual dreams is the highest heritage of the human race. Yes, we say, conjure up dreams by Will and then calmly drink in the invigorating *amrita* that will then flow into your heart. Learn to withdraw into the *sanctum sanctorum* of your soul, and the bliss of all the three worlds is there. Be meditative, and you will reach the goal of all happiness. The divine flute of Krishna is ever sending forth celestial melodies in the very atmosphere which we breathe, but we can hear it only when the chaotic tumult of worldly thoughts

has been laid asleep. Drowned in the solemn profundity of your soul, worship devoutly the sweet influence which then remains upon you, and from this it is, you should know, that you are to derive strength to fight with the terrible foes around you. Look back upon the earlier portion of your life, and there, buried under the ashes of subsequent physical experiences, you will find the glowing embers having a spiritual fire. In childhood the consciousness is not completely materialized, and as we are just then bringing to a close a period of spiritual existence, we continue to be vivified by soul-influence. *Then*, we do not quite understand nor very much care for the wild chatter of men around, and have no option but to dream happily. What will help you most in spiritual development is the putting forth of all your energies to keep the Mystic Peace of your soul undisturbed, even in the midst of worldly company and in the thick of material affairs. While conversing, to all appearances, with your friends and relatives try with head and heart to live in a world of your own creation. Create in yourself a sort of inward yearning for the soul, a "Heartache for the Beloved," to use the language of the Sufis, without whom your very life would be one vast barren desert of horror and pain. How pathetically does the Sufis poet sing :—

"Marà dar manzile jánàn ché anno ayesh chem hardum.
Jaras faryàd midárad ké bar bundaid mahmilha."

"What possible delight could I find in the stages of my journey to the beloved when every moment arises the sound : Prepare for thy journey." Think not that we are talking of vague improbabilities. See in the case of a mesmerist, what human Will, though distracted by a thousand and one material ambitions, can do. What then of the Will, subtle as it is, when it is directed on the highest subtlety, and, moreover, spirit, body and soul are all working in the same direction—which cannot be possible in any other pursuit. Only try constantly to live in the Inner World of Rest and Calm, and your external consciousness will then lose its intensity of colour. True you will move in the world all the same, but its appearances and events will affect you but as dreams —compared to the beauties of the new life you have begun to live. See how the moon which shines with all effulgence by the reflection of the light of the sun, loses its brightness and turns into a pale piece of cloud on the rise of the sun itself; so our external consciousness that shines with a dazzle by the reflection of the spiritual light gets dimmed and pale on the approach of a higher consciousness. Therefore, whether you are travelling lonely and unfriended to a distant country, or are lying on the bosom of a dear wife enjoying the sweets of a comfortable home, forget not that you are but a pilgrim journeying to your native land from which you have strayed out. Let us then pray in Matthew Arnold's sad, sweet words :—

"Calm soul of all things! Make it mine
To feel amid the city's jar,
That there abides a piece of thine,
Man did not make, and cannot mar!
The will to neither strive nor cry,
The power to feel with others give!
Calm, calm me more! nor let me die
Before I have begun to live."

—GYANBHIKSHACHARI.

# "THE OLD WISDOM-RELIGION," NOW CALLED "THEOSOPHY."

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## A LECTURE BY J. D. BUCK, M.D.*

THEOSOPHY is the very last subject to be intruded upon unwilling auditors; but, on the other hand, no one in the least deserving the name, Theosophist, will withhold his testimony when given a fair chance and a courteous hearing. It is but just, that I should at the outset explain in what sense I am a Theosophist.

Theosophy is sometimes defined as "the Wisdom of God." I am not a Theosophist in any sense that implies the possession of such wisdom. When the tyrant of Syracuse asked Pythagoras, "Are there in your country no wise men?" the sage replied, "No, we are not wise, but lovers of wisdom." In this sense am I also a Theosophist, and a member of the Theosophical Society. I could most sincerely wish that one more able to define and express that which for myself I know to be true, might address you in my place. Just as a fond mother dresses her beloved and bedecks her with flowers, anxious that she shall appear at her best and be somewhat to others what she is to her mother's heart, so would I desire that that transcendent truth, not indeed a child of mine, yet beloved all the more, should appear to you comely and attractive, and so win your approval. I can, indeed, put forth no more than I apprehend, and give only as I have received; and so far as that contains the truth, you will, no doubt, receive and welcome it. Whatsoever of obscurity and unattractiveness my statements may contain, that is all mine; whatsoever appears beneficent and desirable, belongs to truth, and so much, at least, we may hold in common.

Science has made wonderful advancement in modern times, and philosophy is again coming to the front. With the ceaseless revolutions in human thought, old words gain enlarged and sometimes entirely different meanings, and hence our lexicons seldom keep pace with our vocabularies. Words are sometimes found to be inappropriate and very often inadequate to express ideas. To undertake to define theosophy from the basis of philology and phonetics would be as useless as it would be found difficult. Old speculations are constantly appearing under new

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names, though seldom without modifications and additions. It is thus that certain legends are found in many languages and in every age. Sometimes we can trace the direct lines of transmission, and discern very close relations and similarities; and again only faint resemblances, with one basic idea running through the group. The foremost scholars of the age are at present engaged in just this line of research. When in its earlier history philology was more closely confined to the phonetic values and relations of words, progress was necessarily slow and uncertain. The real genius of a people may be embodied rather than expressed in its language. Even with modern languages and contemporaneous scholars, the number of individuals who really and thoroughly master any language but their own is comparatively small; and they are fewer still who are enabled to habitually mould their thoughts to a foreign tongue, except after many years' residence in the foreign land, and habitual association with its people. When, however, the language is foreign and its people extinct or absorbed into other races, the difficulty is greatly increased. With every change in the range and form of human thought, comes a corresponding change in the mode of expression. Our religions and mythologies and most of our traditions come from the far East. We may trace all these to a people who, born under genial suns, were sensuous and imaginative to the last degree. Ideas there clothed themselves with fantastic garb, and words were rich in imagery. Myths, legends, parables, and allegories, were the common stock, and even the plebeian breathed a classic atmosphere. When these old forms of thought and speech have been brought down to modern times, and the attempt has been made to reduce them to plodding speech in an age of steam, the goddesses that once held open court on high Olympus and wove their silken veils in distant legends, are often reduced to country witches with wooden shoes; the dance is ended, and the music gone. The scriptures that are known to us as the old and new testaments, come from the Greek and the still more ancient Hebrew originals; and much of these can be traced to a still earlier source. In rendering these ancient manuscripts into modern English, the literal learning of the schools has had much to do, and knowledge of their original meaning, very little. Traditional authority, not as to what these books originally meant, but as to what they should now mean, has given a strong bias to all such translations. Greek and Hebrew words have been literally rendered into English prose, divested of all original imagery; or, when this could not be done, imagery has almost invariably been sacrificed to so-called orthodoxy. Not only do these two languages abound in imagery almost wholly unknown in modern times, not only are these writings full of art speech and ideographs, but with both Greek and Hebrew this art speech was embodied in a system of philosophy,

dramatically represented in the mysteries of initiation. The text, therefore, if fully written, which was seldom the case, and correctly translated, which is still more rare, would be to the original, what one of the plays of Shakespeare is to its dramatic representation with star actors in every *rôle*, and with perfect stage appointments. Probably the only place where any adequate idea of the meaning of these ancient Hebrew ideographs can be gleaned is in some of the degrees of modern masonry; though unfortunately, the student would even here have himself to supply the key to the "lost word." Among the ancient Greeks there were the lesser and the greater mysteries. No complete description of these initiations has ever come down to modern times, for the very good reason that no such descriptions were ever allowed to be written. Vague references to them may be found in many places, particularly in the writings of Plato and the neo-Platonists, but when these references have been translated into English, unaccompanied by the key to their interpretation, they are fantastic, whenever they pass beyond vapid nonsense. If, however, one can gain some insight into the purpose and meaning of these ancient initiations, he will not only be able to bring order out of confusion, but he will be thereby enabled to interpret other ancient writings, with the unqualified assurance that he is deriving their real meaning. The key to one is the key to all.

One of the greatest of modern writers has declared that, "to go back to Plato is to make progress," but it makes all the difference in the world by what route we enter ancient Greece, and with what *shibboleth* we knock at the gates of those ancient temples, where, after purification and due initiation, men like Plato and Pythagoras were admitted to the banquet of the Gods. It may be stated in brief, that the lesser Greek mysteries constituted a school of training, in which the neophyte was prepared for the real work and grander initiation vouchsafed in the greater mysteries. In the lesser mysteries the neophyte's purpose was tried and his character formed; the science and the philosophy of life were inculcated. History informs us that many candidates were never able to pass these preliminary degrees. In the lesser mysteries the journey of the soul through time, and as embodied in matter was dramatically represented. The candidate thus informed and disciplined, fortified by wise counsel and repeated trial, at last undertook the great initiation. Here began the real conflict with evil, where the soul of the postulant was the field of battle. All this had been previously explained and dramatically represented in the lesser mysteries. The candidate must now fight with evil in every form, and fight single-handed for the possession of the empire of his own soul. It was said that he who endured to the end, was given a white stone, in which was a name written that no

man could read save he who had received it. He who conquered was admitted to the banquet of the Gods. The coffer in the king's chamber of the great pyramid of Gheza was an altar, used in the last degree of initiation in some of these mysteries. The meaning of life, the nature, the ministry, and the destiny of man, thus became clear to him who had thus both theoretically and practically wrought out its varied problems in his own life, and so gained the supremacy of his own soul. Read again the writings of Plato with even this crude outline of a key, and see how pregnant they become with meaning, and how lucid many obscure passages now appear. The mason who comprehends the use made of numerals, and remembers the perfect points of his entrance, ought also to get a glimmer of light with his "working tools." No one will get any adequate idea of that which was and is accomplished in these real initiations, till he learns experimentally by intelligent and persistent effort to master his lower animal nature. Without this personal experience he will discredit, if he does not also ridicule any statement of the result of this self-conquest.

Among the ancient Hebrews a similar system prevailed. The Cabballah was to the initiated Hebrew what the mysteries were to the Greek. In "The Romance of Spinoza's Life," as related by Auerbach, may be seen a remnant of this ancient wisdom of the Jews. The graphic account therein given of the excommunication of Spinoza, the indignities and anathemas to which he fell a victim, remind one of the tragic fate of Socrates. Each paid the penalty at the hands of the rabble for unveiling the mysteries. Socrates was accused of corrupting the Athenian youth; Spinoza, of heresy and apostacy to his religion. The masses cannot endure, nor does an ignorant priesthood desire, the simple truth. The prophets of Israel denounced alike the sins of the people, and the profanations of the priests; and Jerusalem was hailed by the Master as, "Thou that stonest the prophets." In his very learned and able treatise on the Jewish Cabballah, Ginsburg gives, no doubt, all that secular or profane history has to give in regard to these mysteries; but if one possess even a little knowledge of the nature and purpose of these ancient initiations, and some slight ability to read between the lines, he will be aware of a deeper significance than Ginsburg discloses to the profane reader. Whether this learned scholar purposely conceals, and possesses more knowledge than he unfolds, is a matter of little consequence. Tradition is at this point far more lucid than history, and the Cabballah that Molitor discloses is to that of Ginsburg, as a living soul to a dead body. If a modern scholar, versed in the technical meaning of words, and the rules of grammar, and restrained by orthodox bias to certain limits and usages, attempts to translate the cabballistic books, he will make of the so-called lesser and

greater "Holy Assemblies" little more than an association of lunatics, or a congregation of fools, as has often been done. These writings, so far as the profane world is concerned, were never meant to be understood, any more than the monitors of modern masonry are meant to reveal all that occurs in a lodge room. These writings were not meant to reveal but to blind, and to conceal from all but the initiated the real truths and the sublime wisdom to which they referred, and which to the initiated were common property. Just here a question naturally arises and presses for an answer. If this concealed wisdom was so profound and so beneficent, why was it so jealously guarded and so constantly concealed? It is not my province to explain, nor my purpose to defend these mysteries. I desire only to show their existence, their general characteristics, and their co-ordinate relation through the ages. The purpose and the effect of this secrecy may, however, be explained. Let us suppose, for example, a community of ignorant and superstitious men and women, possessing but little intelligence, a low moral sense, and held in check by fear of the law, and by superstitious reverence for the outer forms and ceremonies of religion. Such a community would be unable to understand the philosophy lying back of all religious forms, or to appreciate any higher moral restraint than fear. By misinterpretation of that brighter light that blinds where it cannot illuminate, and by misapplication of that larger liberty that so easily degenerates into license with the selfish and the ignorant, the full truth would be destructive. Imagine such a community suddenly set free from all accustomed restraints. No law, no religion, no God, no Devil, in any sense that they could understand, every man and every woman a slave to the bodily lusts and a law to self. Every one can foresee the result. Ask yourselves, my hearers, what would be the logical result amongst certain classes in our own land, were they to hold your own more advanced views regarding many of these things, without first having grown up into larger liberty, through loyalty to the higher light of reason, justice, charity and humanity. The natural relation between ignorance and superstition, vice and fear, are thus easily discerned.

If the truth is to make us free, loyalty to truth must first make us worthy of freedom. So long as superstition has its votaries, will fear exercise over the ignorant a wholesome restraint. The higher truth revealed in the mysteries of initiation served to illumine, not to dethrone religion; but where they could not illumine they would inevitably dethrone; they have therefore been always guarded from the profane, and veiled in symbols and allegories capable of many interpretations, only the most crude and harmless of which are likely to become known. The more intelligent often scorn these interpretations; they can, however, make no greater mistake than to suppose that none others are both possible and rational.

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I have so far referred to but two forms of ancient initiations, selecting these for the reason that it is from them that we have derived the larger number of our traditions. It could easily be shown, however, that similar structures lie back of all the world's great religions, and mingle more or less with all our traditions and myths. While we may be unable to trace all these to one common source, they can all be shown to refer to the same great truth, viz., the divinity in man and his victory over himself. The clue to the labyrinth in one of these traditions is the key to all. The outer garb and form of expression differ, the principle is everywhere the same, and this principle was embodied in symbols and ideographs, variously interpreted, yet capable in the hands of an initiate of harmonious and co-ordinate interpretation. Paul sat at the feet of the wise Gamaliel and was learned in matters of the law; and Jesus is believed to have been an Essene, as his teachings are perfectly consistent with those of that sect of communists as recorded by Philo and Josephus.

If the foregoing conclusions are valid (and they are supported by the most overwhelming testimony), it follows, that any literal rendering of the crude surface meanings of ancient writings which in art-speech, glyph, and parable, refer to these deeper mysteries, fail entirely to give their real meaning. In modern times this literal rendering of ancient text is fast losing its hold on the minds and consciences of men. A portion, at least, of the present humanity have outgrown the bondage of sense that finds its counterpart in superstition, and its restraint in fear; and has but slight regard for these ancient records, which were formerly held to be so sacred that to alter a word or a letter of them was to be accursed. When, however, these records come to be regarded in an entirely different light, and are divested of all superstition, and when it is shown that our artists and architects have revealed to us only the scaffolding that was used in the construction, and which have been made to conceal these ancient temples, erected to God and dedicated to the service of Truth and the elevation of man, a new interest will again centre in these old truths, and the smouldering fires will be rekindled on ancient altars. But why, it may be asked, need we rehabilitate these ancient shrines, and reillumine these ancient altars? Why not create anew? Man cannot divest himself of his past. We are involved in the history and the heredity of all past ages, and destined still to unfold their sequence. Man is involved in humanity, and humanity is without beginning or end. Man receives from the father and transmits to the son. The genius of humanity with one hand points to the past, till the vision is bewildered by the night of time; with the other she points to the future, till the vision fails in the light of coming dawn. Only as we correctly interpret the past, and wisely forecast the future, can we hope to apprehend the present. And I might add

—only as we apprehend the present can we read the past or forecast the future. The present is but a point, moving ceaselessly around the endless cycles of time.

Enough has perhaps now been said to show that no mere dictionary definition of the words, Cabballah, and Mysteries, could adequately define them. Theosophy is a word of similar import, and to define it as the "wisdom of God," would be meaningless. Neither is the meaning of the word to be apprehended by a hasty glance at the history and outward promulgations and manifestations of the present Theosophical Society, though one at all familiar with ancient landmarks, will trace many resemblances.

Theosophy comprises that body of truths which in many forms, under many names, and in all ages, constitutes the substance, and the essence of the true initiation; and which undertakes to explain and to apply the everlasting principles of truth and righteousness to the individual life of man, and the elevation of humanity to-day. The fire of life and the light of truth are eternal; and the fires on ancient altars that for centuries were not allowed to expire or to grow dim symbolized this light of truth.

To the interested student and the searcher after truth, theosophy may be apprehended as unfolding on parallel lines. These parallel lines may be designated as the theoretical and the practical; or the ideal and the real; or again, as designated in scripture, as the doctrine and the life. Each of these lines pre-supposes the other. The theory that certain results will follow certain actions, suggests the act, in order to verify the result. It is true that in still another sense one may theorize in regard to theosophy as in regard to any truth; and such speculation may lead to opinion or to prejudice without leading to any real knowledge, or to any higher life. Hence comes very early in the theosophical quest the test of motive. Theosophy deals with the deep things of life, and the real and lasting interests of the human soul; and he who has but an idle curiosity in regard to these will hardly seek the truth in such manner as is likely to bring any lasting reward or satisfaction; though he may find food for speculation or even for ridicule.

The neophyte is therefore challenged at the outer gate: "What seek ye?" The body of man is the temple of initiation and both the challenge and the reply, come from within; and according as the neophyte makes answer, will be his entrance through the gates and his passage beyond the first veil of initiation. If to the challenge: "What seekest thou, O soul of man?" the answer comes, "O nothing in particular, I was just looking idly around to see what amusement I could find"; man would hear in response only the voice of the passions and bodily appetites which are always

seeking fresh gratification, and be deaf to the still small voice heard in the soul only when all else is still. We are dealing with the journey of life and the experience of the soul; not as a matter of sentiment, but as a sober reality. Suppose that each one of us were to pause just here and ask of his own soul the following questions: What is the real meaning of life? What is my own purpose in life? What are the chances of its accomplishment? How far does it concern the welfare of others? Can I conceive of a higher object with a better motive, and can I hope in any degree to accomplish that? This self-examination is the first step in the real study of theosophy, and for myself I can say, without a moment's hesitation, that satisfactory answers come to all such inquiries; not upon outside authority that must not be questioned, and in answers that cannot be understood, but in conscious agreement and co-ordinate harmony that satisfy the soul. The real self-conscious centre in man seldom governs in the affairs of life. We long for love, we lust for fame or power or gold; and we are led to this lusting and longing, not so much by conscious purpose and deliberate choice, as by the clamorous passions and the fickle appetites that hold us in bondage, and lead us in chains. Even here, when the mind and soul become consciously centred on any of these pursuits, and when man bends his will to the accomplishment of his object and is ready to sacrifice all else to win success, failure is well-nigh impossible; though dust and ashes are the result. Schopenhauer is right; the will of man is supreme; and people fail even in ordinary pursuits because they scatter their forces instead of concentrating them under the guidance of the will. All such success, however, brings man back to himself, dissatisfied and hungry still. In the flood-tide of prosperity, when the soul is drunk with the purple flood of life as with the fumes of wine, we seldom pause to take account of stock; we seldom stand face to face with ourselves. When, however, love grows cold, or the beloved one slips from our embrace into the unseen, when the laurel wreath becomes a crown of thorns; when gold no longer glitters or when it takes to itself wings; when the power we sought to wield has become a very tyrant, and we realize the meaning of the saying, "Uneasy lies the head that wears a crown"; then it is that man is brought face to face with himself, and the lesson deeper than words is burned into his soul. Man stands speechless and bewildered, benumbed and terrified, gazing into the mirror as though he had seen a ghost—the ghost of his higher self born of the pure ideals he has lost. For such a one the wine of life never again touches the brim, or bubbles into careless joy. He drinks cautiously, looking for the serpent coiled in the bottom of the cup.

"The wine of life is drawn,
And naught remains but lees."

Many who thus for a brief space stand face to face with truth waken from the dream insane; some rush to suicide, and others become melancholy cynics. All who have carefully studied human life know that this great awakening come sooner or later to everyone who passes life's meridian. If the years flow on with measured tread, and uniform health and prosperity bring the neophyte in life's mysteries down to the grave, the revelation still comes, even though it is the angel of death that bears the challenge: "Awake thou that sleepest." The awakening comes to sad-eyed children who hear a voice in the midst of their play as an echo of the still eternities; and these little ones become our guides or our inquisitors. The dial of time counts not by years, save only when we are drunk with the passions and are deceiving ourselves. Whenever the sun of truth rises, the day of the soul begins; and man may face to the dawn if he will, or he may wrap the mantle of night about him and forever refuse light. The neophyte in the mysteries of being may face his destiny without fear of the sphynx. What holdest thou, O stormy hearted goddess breeding by the fertile Niles of life? Ho, marble effigy! I conjure and I defy thee! "I will terrify thee with thyself, O white-faced neophyte; divested of all thy trappings and shorn of all thy glitter: nay, take them all; 'tis thus I cast them in thy face, and still defy thee! I know thy riddle, and I scorn thy power! Pass on, O neophyte; and may thy head be gently pillowed on the bosom of Isis; may Osiris protect and defend thee, I cannot harm thee." A Persian monarch once propounded to a captive in chains this riddle: "Which is the greater, the strength of the king; the strength of women; or the strength of wine?" and the captive, himself a prince, made answer: "Great are all these, O king, yet above them all is the power and the majesty of Truth": and the king replied: "Blessed be the God of Truth."

The real student of Theosophy is a neophyte, seeking initiation into the mysteries of life. He may have teachers and guides, and these may instruct and prepare him, but when he touches foot on the threshold of the greater mysteries he stands alone. Step by step must he feel his way, guided only by experience, and the light of truth in his own soul. All around him dance and glimmer the fitful rays of the will-o'-the-wisp. Nothing will hinder him from following these should he so desire. None of these can deceive him if he sincerely desires the light of truth, that brings to every one the message, "He that seeketh me diligently shall surely find me." The ideal life is not fantastic and visionary as many suppose, nor does it take man out of the world and away from temptation; nor yet does it destroy his usefulness and unsettle his reason. The true ideal is the only real life. It despises not the common things, but holds them at their true value, and puts them to the most beneficent use. It is thus that the neophyte lives and learns, and learns to live.

As an integral factor of the great body—humanity—the neophyte is related to his fellow-men, and as body and soul are blended in man, so is man related to humanity. While, therefore, the physical life of the body outwardly unfolds and man adjusts his relations to his fellow-men, the spiritual life of the soul illumines and guides the life. As the spirit is informed, the body is transformed, and the neophyte slowly mounts the winding stairway of initiation. To learn, and to apply, to study and to unfold, is the method of all true initiations. The lines of doctrine and of life run parallel and must be continually adjusted, else all progress will cease.

The Theosophical Society was organised for the purpose of promulgating the Theosophical doctrines, and for the promotion of the Theosophic life. The present Theosophical Society is not the first of its kind. I have a volume entitled: "Theosophical Transactions of the Philadelphian Society," published in London in 1697; and another with the following title: "Introduction to Theosophy, or the science of the mystery of Christ; that is, of Deity, Nature and Creature, embracing the philosophy of all the working powers of life, magical and spiritual, and forming a practical guide to the sublimest purity, sanctity, and evangelical perfection; also to the attainment of divine vision, and the holy angelical arts, potencies, and other prerogatives of the regeneration," (published in London in 1855). The following is the dedication of this volume: "To the students of Universities, Colleges, and schools of Christendom: To Professors of Metaphysical, Mechanical, and Natural Science in all its forms: To men and women of Education generally, of fundamental orthodox faith: To Deists, Arians, Unitarians, Swedenborgians, and other defective and ungrounded creeds, rationalists and sceptics of every kind: To just-minded and enlightened Mohammedans, Jews, and oriental Patriarch-religionists; but especially to the gospel minister and missionary, whether to the barbaric or the intellectual peoples, this introduction to Theosophy, or the science of the ground and mystery of all things, is most humbly and affectionately dedicated." In the following year (1856) another volume was issued, royal octavo of 600 pages, diamond type, of "Theosophical Miscellanies." Of the last-named work 500 copies only were issued, for gratuitous distribution to Libraries and Universities. These earlier movements, of which there were many, originated within the church, with persons of great piety and earnestness, and of unblemished character; and all of these writings were in orthodox form, using the Christian expressions, and, like the writings of the eminent churchman William Law, would only be distinguished by the ordinary reader for their great earnestness and piety. These were one and all but attempts to derive and explain the deeper meanings and original import of the Christian Scriptures, and to

illustrate and unfold the theosophic life. These works were soon forgotten and are now generally unknown. They sought to reform the clergy and revive genuine piety, and were never welcomed. That one word, "Heresy," was sufficient to bury them in the limbo of all such Utopias. At the time of the Reformation John Reuchlin made a similar attempt with the same result, though he was the intimate and trusted friend of Luther. Orthodoxy never desired to be informed and enlightened. These reformers were informed as was Paul by Festus, that too much learning has made them mad, and that it would be dangerous to go farther. Passing by the verbiage which was partly a matter of habit and education with these writers, and partly due to religious restraint through secular power, and coming to the core of the matter, these writings were theosophical in the strictest sense, and pertain solely to man's knowledge of his own nature and the higher life of the soul. The present theosophical movement has sometimes been declared to be an attempt to convert Christendom to Buddhism, which means simply that the word "Heresy" has lost its terrors and relinquished its power. Individuals in every age have more or less clearly apprehended the theosophical doctrines and wrought them into the fabric of their lives. These doctrines belong exclusively to no religion, and are confined to no society or time. They are the birthright of every human soul. Such a thing as orthodox theosophy has never existed, for the simple reason that all of life's problems must be wrought out by each individual according to his nature and his needs, and according to his varying experience. This may explain why those who have imagined theosophy to be a new religion have hunted in vain for its creed and its ritual. Its creed is simply Loyalty to Truth, and its ritual "To honour every truth by use."

To the casual observer the sentiment of the majority of the members of the T.S., whenever and howsoever that sentiment may be determined, may no doubt appear to represent the doctrines and status of the society. Or again, the irresponsible utterances and erratic genuflections of the veriest crank who boasts of his membership in a society from which none are excluded who desire to enter, may be taken as "orthodox theosophy," as has often been done. Everyone must read for himself; not only the signs of the times, but the signals of truth, and far be it from true theosophy to say him nay. No intelligent theosophist follows blindly any outward authority, whether he be taught by the ancient wisdom, or by that noble woman to whom every true theosophist owes a debt of gratitude, and whom every lover of truth will one day honour, for he knows that he must find his guiding star in the inner temples of his own soul. The two large volumes recently issued by Mme. Blavatsky are an aggregation of ancient literatures, traditions, and mythologies,

bearing on the real initiation of man into the mystery of being. The comments and explanations found on nearly every one of these 1,600 royal octavo pages of the "Secret Doctrine" are both interesting and instructive to all who patiently and persistently seek the truth. Many a blind hint and obscure meaning are thus made plain. Such a mine of ancient wisdom has probably never been given to the world since history began. The truth is there for those who desire it.

Most persons nowadays are familiar with the phenomena of modern spiritualism, and those who believe all such phenomena to arise from fraud or self-deception, are still compelled to stop in the presence of the recent phenomena called hypnotic, and admit the fact of psychic phenomena. Theosophy has something to say in regard to both classes of phenomena, not only in the way of instruction, but also in the way of admonition. Between a medium under invisible control, and a hypnotic subject under magnetic control, there lies the unfolding of man's higher nature, and the development of psychic power independent of all outward control, and guided by the light of reason and intuition; and it is this natural evolution of the higher self in man that theosophy recommends and assists.

There are two terms frequently employed in referring to psychic phenomena. These are unconscious cerebration; and hypnotic suggestion. The former expression is now less frequently used since hypnotism has come to be the fashion, and may very profitably be discarded altogether, for it is based on a fallacy, born of presumption, and ministers only to pedantry. The phrase is made up of two factors, and refers to consciousness and to cerebral activity ordinarily giving rise to thought. The condition referred to is, in its way, as conscious as any other; hence to apply the expression "unconscious" to it is a misnomer. Designating this peculiar form of cerebration as "unconscious" gives rise to the idea that the more ordinary form is itself a matter of consciousness, and thus is a fallacy. Who among us at the present moment is conscious of the varied and complicated cerebral changes that every physiologist knows to accompany the process of thought? We are conscious, and we are thinking. We may think of consciousness, and we are conscious of thought; but we are not conscious of the rhythmic flow of the blood, or of those intricate molecular changes that make thought possible. If we designate all these changes as "cerebration," and then re-christen them as "thought," we lose sight of the fact that we are aware of no such thing as thought apart from consciousness. Consciousness and thought are inseparable in all manifested intelligence. Therefore, cerebration without consciousness cannot be shown to give rise to thought at all; and cerebration without either thought or consciousness never manifests intelligence, but is purely

physiological, and soon becomes pathological and destructive. The phrase "unconscious cerebration" is meaningless so far as the process to which it refers is concerned; but its use leads to still another fallacy, and that is, the supposition that by thus naming the process we have in any sense apprehended it. If we inquire of those who so flippantly make use of this expression, "What is clairvoyance and clair-audience?" for example; the ready answer comes: "Why, don't you know? unconscious cerebration, of course," and we are correspondingly enlightened and so much obliged. The term hypnotic suggestion certainly refers to a fact in psychology, often demonstrated, and easily repeated; but it by no means enlightens us as to the real nature of man, the process of thought, or the nature of consciousness; though it suggests the relations of the last two factors in all manifested intelligence. The objection to all this nomenclature lies in the fact that it arises from the material side of the equation, and practically claims that there is no other side. The equation stands in this way: The sum of all manifested intelligence and all life equal zero. We cannot get rid of the cosmic form even here; would it then not be the part of wisdom to seek the true value of the zero side of the equation?

The method of investigation usually employed, and that specially characterizes modern times, proceeds from a physical basis, and regards only the phenomenal existence. The idea that the phenomenal world of sense and time is really but one side of the present existence, seems very seldom to have dawned on the understanding of man. The average man of the world is likely to possess an average of the virtues, and equally an average of all the vices. To suppress the latter and to encourage the former is the aim of most codes of moral ethics, and is in every way commendable and desirable. It is generally supposed that when the vices are all removed, and when there thus results a life that is blameless, the highest point in human achievement has been reached. This blameless life may, however, be not only negative and colourless, but even imbecile. One has hardly accomplished the full purpose of being when he has ceased to harm himself or others. Viewed in this light, the last step in the ladder of human perfection is the first step in the life that is truly divine. It is in regard to this negative goodness that the sacred writer declares—"I would have you either hot or cold, but because you are neither hot nor cold I have spewed you out of my mouth." The wisdom religion not only reveals the purpose of life, but unfolds and develops the powers of man, so that he may become a god in the sense that the Platonic writers use that word. In the ancient mysteries all theoretical teachings and dramatic representations were followed by experimental efforts on the part of the neophyte. As to the result of such experiment, when wisely directed after due pre-

paration and instruction, it is enough to say that it opened new avenues, and developed new powers, and introduced the candidate into the subjective world. This may seem a strong draft either upon credulity or imagination. To those, however, who are familiar with the method usually employed to develop so-called mediumistic powers, and with the results that often follow, even without any previous training, or any knowledge of the laws governing development, will readily see the force and meaning of the true initiation. Nothing can be more undesirable or dangerous than trifling with these unknown powers, for insanity and suicide lie that way. Nothing can be more beneficent than the unfolding of man's higher nature as the result of complete harmony of development. What but this is the aim of the true Christian life, which has the promise of being able to perform even greater works than Christ himself performed? In every one of these mysteries the theosophic life has promise of the same reward, for the wisdom religion lies back of one and all.

In organizing the present Theosophical Society three objects were declared to be its chief motive. First, to establish a nucleus of Universal Brotherhood without distinction of race, creed, sex, or colour; second, to investigate ancient religions and mythologies, for reasons that I trust are now plain; third, to study and unfold the latent psychical powers in man, for reasons now also apparent. In joining the society the candidate is required to subscribe to the first declaration only. Assent to the doctrine of the unqualified and universal brotherhood of man is made essential; the other two incidental; and the candidate is free to investigate ancient religions and the latent powers of his own soul, or not, as he sees fit. It could not otherwise happen than that some who have joined the society should have forgotten the essential brotherhood, and become phenomenon hunters; for no restraints have been imposed beyond the car didate's own declaration upon honour, and no trials for heresy or apostacy have been instituted or are likely to be. Neither coercion nor restraint are imposed. In all initiations ancient and modern, the candidate's first declaration is this: "I come of my own free will and accord."

Since the organization of the T. S. one thing is quite apparent, and that is, that investigation into ancient religions has greatly increased. Comparisons have been instituted, and if these comparisons have at times seemed odious, the odium, instead of resting always, as heretofore, upon some other religion, has sometimes rested upon our own. Tardy justice has thus sometimes taken the place of odium born of self-interest and egoism. All religions are found to contain an element of truth, and each religion formulates that truth, and designates its creed, and its ceremonies, according to the genius of the age in which it abounds, and the needs and abilities of the people where it exists. As each of these formulations

differs from the rest, Theosophy seizes hold of the element of truth lying back of all forms, and holds this truth to be essential, and all else incidental. This truth of Theosophy is not a happy after-thought, a mere deduction or generalization from the outer forms of all religions, but arises from an apprehension of the core of all religions as revealed by the secret doctrine, or the process of initiation into the wisdom religion. The test of fellowship and the bond of union in all modern religions is the creed, or formulated belief, and conformity to their ceremonies and usages. All these religions hold as a secondary proposition, the principle of charity; though this principle is practically curtailed beyond the bounds of sect-communion, as has been illustrated in all religious wars, and most sectarian disputes. Theosophy makes this law of charity universal and unqualified, the bond of union and the principle of all correct living, and expresses it as, Universal Brotherhood. While, therefore, theosophy thus supplements many religions, it really antagonizes none; and in thus bringing charity to the front, it seeks the substantial unity of the whole human race. As a result of this common bond of brotherhood and basis of agreement, there are found in the society persons of all colours, nationalities, and religious beliefs; and according as they sincerely hold, and intelligently manifest and interpret this principle of charity and toleration, will be found the benefits which they receive and bestow.

When to each of these religionists it is clearly pointed out, that back of his own religion lies the secret doctrine, explaining the powers, the ministry, and the destiny of man, he returns to a study of his own religion with a new zeal and with an added inspiration. The Theosophical Society stands as a witness to these great truths, the apprehension and promulgation of which it was organized to promote; and in spite of misapprehension on the part of some of its members, and misrepresentation on the part of its enemies, it has promoted these great objects to an extent but little known and seldom realized. Theosophy has never sought to overthrow any religion, or to substitute one form of religion for another, but rather to purify, elevate, and reform all. When it is once clearly perceived that lying back of all great religions is the Old Wisdom Religion, to which not only Rawlinson, but many other writers refer, and that this stands to the outer form of all religions, as soul to body; and when the principles of this secret doctrine are clearly explained, it will be found to be a key to the interpretation of all religions.

The two large volumes of the "Secret Doctrine" recently issued by Mme. Blavatsky, furnish just this key, dealing as they do with the origin and nature of creation and with the origin and nature of man. After referring to the nations of antiquity that had lost, or partially lost, all

knowledge of the primeval religion, Rawlinson says: "There were others again who lost scarcely anything, but hid up the truth in mystic language and strange symbolism." "The only theory," he says, "which accounts for all the facts, for the unity as well as the diversity of ancient religions, is that of a primeval revelation variously corrupted through the manifold and multiform deteriorations of human nature in different races and places." In his "History of Secret Societies," Heckthorne makes a similar statement, and summarizes the tenets of this ancient religion.

The revival of this ancient wisdom, and the recovery of lost arts and long-forgotten learning, may not, after all, appeal to this utilitarian age with any degree of force. What, then, are its practical bearings on the present time and the needs of man to-day? As it relates to humanity as a whole, it aims to bring about the reign of peace and universal toleration without persuasively or forcibly transferring sectarians from one cult to another, so that, with the largest liberty of thought, it aims at the practical unity of the race, and this no single religion has ever attempted.

The practical value of the wisdom-religion will be that it will reveal to individual man his own nature, and assist him to realize his high destiny. The inquiry will come, "Does not the Christian religion accomplish this much for man?" I answer yes; and so do many others, if man but reads intelligently and wisely utilizes the lessons therein contained. He who imagines, however, that no divine star ever shone on this sin-stricken world till the Babe was born in Bethlehem a few hundred years ago, has misinterpreted both the divine beneficence, and the long and sorrowful journey of the children of men. The guiding star has shone over other cradles and been called by other names. Its rays brighten at the birth of every man and every woman who is to feel the common sorrow, and help to lift the common load that oppresses all humanity and degrades the toiling, sorrowing, children of men. The lonely captive loaded with chains, and the martyr in his chariot of fire, have seen the heavenly star, and the Comforter has come unto them when the divine voice has whispered in their souls, "They persecuted me, they will also persecute you, but blessed, thrice blessed are ye." This sublime exaltation of faith, and triumph of soul means far more than a formulated creed, or an intellectual belief. It means the foundation of the kingdom of heaven in the enlightened soul of man.

The most curious interest attaches to theosophy on account of its vein of so-called occultism. Whether or not this occult vein shall be able to justify itself, quite certain it is that it is this phase of the subject, which more than anything else has called attention to theosophy; and while this phase of theosophy invariably attracts the lovers of the marvellous, it has often repulsed the more thoughtful who have, nevertheless, given the sub-

ject but little study. Occultism may be regarded as a department by itself, with a literature of its own. It has so often been cultivated by charlatans, and made use of to impose on the ignorant and the credulous, that it has very justly fallen into disrepute. Let us remember, however, that where there is no true coin there can be no counterfeit. The more subtle forces of nature and the finer sensibilities of man are but little understood, and yet these form an essential part of nature and of man; and we are constantly surrounded by these powers and exercising these functions unconsciously. These things seem to us fantastic and unreliable only because we are ignorant of their nature and the laws that govern them. Because of this subtlety and our own ignorance, this is pre-eminently the domain of superstition. The antidote for both ignorance and superstition is real knowledge. It is a great mistake to assume that these things have no real existence, and those who do this are generally as superstitious in their way as anyone. Very few persons seem able to form any rational conception of the unseen universe, and yet it is from this invisible world that every object in nature comes, and to it all material things return. It is this process of appearance and disappearance that constitutes the phenomenal world which most persons imagine to be the only real existence. We fail to note the changes because they are so uniform, so silent, and so slow.

If we seek an illustration of the subtle forces of nature we have not far to look. Suppose we take a stroll some afternoon, and, pursuing a varying course, wander for miles from home. An hour or two after our departure, a favourite and intelligent dog that has regretfully seen us depart and been ordered back, escapes from restraint. He sniffs the air and dropping his muzzle to the ground, follows our every step with little regard for varying wind or weather, or for crossing footsteps. "O yes," you reply, "we all know that a good dog will follow the scent of its master." But it is not the dog that so much interests us as the logical deduction from the phenomenon. We are hardly conscious that we are so full of some subtle essence that it sifts from us at every step, and gives its secret qualities to every footprint, even through the heavy-soled shoes. We are hardly conscious that we leave this same invisible yet material quality of our peculiar personality on every object that we touch; yet such would seem to be the case; and there are persons in almost every community who possess the psychometric power of distinguishing it. Neither is this essence so subtle, nor are our senses so dull, that we always fail to detect these personal emanations. As our garments shape to our bodies, so do they become saturated with ourselves. Our dwellings are full of our presence even when we are invisible, and the very paper on our walls contains the tinctures of our lives. There are dwellings that are saturated

with hate, with lust, and with greed. The ghostly echoes of evil thoughts and the shadows of still more evil deeds, ring their changes and come and go in the heavy laden atmosphere where degraded human beings abide. Who, indeed, has not felt this influence when meeting individuals, or when entering houses? We call it natural sympathy or antipathy, but we seldom pause to examine and analyse it. Neither are these evil influences formless and powerless. They have not only material qualities and individual attributes, but they have form and malignity, and when the principle now called "hypnotic suggestion" is better understood, it will be seen that these malignant influences, born of the evil natures of human beings, have power to poison the weak and sensitive, and to induce disease, or to suggest crime. There is no known principle of heredity which denies that evil propensities are equally inherited with the good. The atmosphere of vice is not a purely imaginary and immaterial thing, but a malignant, material reality. When we realize that we have it in our power to make our own lives just what we please, and that we may fill our homes with blessing instead of cursing; when we learn the importance of saturating the very walls of the habitation we call home, with love, with gentleness, and with kindness and forbearance, then these homes will be to the souls of all who enter them, like the balm of Gilead, and as the health-bearing breezes of the delectable mountains. Then we will realize that it is the invisible or occult forces of nature more than any others that work for human weal or woe. How insignificant compared with these divine guests, that come at our call, are costly draperies and trappings of gold and precious woods; and yet these benedictions may rest within the homes of the poor, and are as often found there as in the palaces of the rich. Theosophy studies and explains these subtle forces, and applies the real knowledge thus derived, for the benefit of man. Theosophy thus stands for righteousness; for manly and womanly lives, and for the health and the happiness of man. I have touched upon but a single picture in the realm of so-called occultism, and that the simplest and most easily understood. The bible is full of references to this very subject, and there are whole books, like those of Job, and the Revelation, that deal almost exclusively with these occult phases of the subject. In the Cabballah, the building of the tabernacle, and the temple of Solomon, with all their measurements, details, and furniture, are made to refer to nothing else but man. These outer buildings and physical things were merely ideographs, used both to convey and to conceal the real meaning, and this principle of symbolism applies equally to the sacred books of all religions, and to all mythologies. There is, moreover, no essential difference in the principle or the truth so concealed. It is everywhere the same; viz., to reveal the divinity in man, and to assist him in recovering his divine inheritance:

one truth in numberless forms running through the countless ages, and known to the initiated as the "Secret Doctrine."

He who would thus recover his lost inheritance, must put off his garb of selfishness, and be able to conceive of ideal truth, while he exercises universal charity. This is the way, the truth, and the life; revealed alike in the teachings and the life of Christ, of Zoroaster, and of all the Buddhas and Avatars since the beginning of human life on this old planet. I will close this somewhat disjointed essay with a Sufe legend illustrating the quest of the soul for Divine truth. The Sufes, it may be remembered, are to the Mohammedans what the Essenes were to the Christians, viz., those initiated into the Secret Doctrine.

Listen to—

"A PARABLE OF JELLALEDDEN."

AT the beloved's door a timid knock was heard,
And a voice came from within, sweeter than morning bird,
Softer than silver drops that from splashing fountains fall,
"Who is there?" and the stillness stirred
For a moment, and that was all.

And the lover who stood without, eager and full of fear,
Answered the silver voice—"It is I who am waiting here;
Open then, my beloved, open thy door to me."
But he heard the response ring clear:—
"This house will not hold me and thee."

And the door remained fast shut, and the lover went away,
Far into the desert's depths, to wait, and fast, and pray:
To dwell in the tents of Sorrow, and drink of the cup of Grief;
And Solitude taught him each day,
And Silence brought him relief.

And after a year he returned, and knocked at the close-shut door,
And he heard the Beloved's voice as it answered him once more;
"Who is there?" And soft as the dew, or the velvety rose-leaf's fall,
And as low as when angels adore,
He said, "'Tis thyself that doth call."

And his heart stood still with fear, and his eager eyes were dim;
Then through the silent night rang the sound of a marriage hymn,
And the bolts and the bars flew back, and the door was open wide,
And fair on the threshold's rim
Stood his Beloved, his Bride.

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# THE GENIUS OF CHRISTENDOM AND THE LAW OF CHRIST.

I AM not here for the purpose of assailing any man's religion or criticising any man's life, be he churchman, materialist, or spiritualist. I am not the authorised representative of any society, sect, or creed, nor would I willingly misrepresent any of these, for however false in statement I might believe them to be, they doubtless represent to others truth, in such measure as they can conceive and hold. I desire a hearing for the sake of that one truth which is many-sided, and which is applicable to all human affairs, and commensurate with all life. The grandest truth ever revealed to man has been belittled and obscured, until it is derided and scorned. The divinity in man has been dethroned and a fetich has taken its place. I desire a hearing in the interest of this great truth, and I say to one and all, Come, let us reason together, and see whether these things are so.

Humanity is in sore distress. Poverty, insanity, disease, and crime beset the children of man, and whether we play comedy or tragedy, the one drop-curtain bearing its emblems of mortality closes the scene, death is written over the portals where young and old have played their parts, and we turn away in silence and in tears. We are told that eighteen hundred years ago Christ came to bring salvation to a fallen race, and yet who dare say that as a whole the human race has been elevated or in any just sense saved. Something must be wrong with our religion or with ourselves. If the religion revealed by Him of Nazareth was true and adequate for all humanity in all time, then we must have misinterpreted and misapplied it. Those who believe and those who deny the religion of Christ are equally interested. If in the sequel it shall appear that the counsels of man have prevailed over the counsels of God, then it may also appear that better counsels will bring us back to the very thing of which we are in search, and for the lack of which humanity is in such sore need. If the disease is in us, and the remedy in our very hands, we have but to apply it in order to be healed.

In the beginning of this quest, protest will come equally from two quarters. Two parties stand opposed to each other, and so far as the subject of religion and all current interpretations are concerned these occupy opposite ground. On the one hand is the so-called orthodox Church-

man, and on the other the out-and-out Materialist. Let these for the time being make common cause, holding their peculiar views in abeyance, and see if in the end they cannot unite on a common truth. I shall undertake to show that the Law of Christ is not only the corner stone of moral ethics, but the very soul of all religion, and that upon the recognition of this law depends the physical, moral, intellectual and spiritual elevation and well-being of man. I shall further show that while one party misinterprets and the other denies this law, both parties more or less exercise it, and that each and all are indebted to it for all that makes life desirable or benefi-cent. To this end it will be necessary to examine somewhat into our present conditions and surroundings, in order to see just where we stand, and to enable us to forecast the future.

No human intercourse is possible without compromise. If I assume independence and declare that I have the right to do as I please in this world, another may make the same declaration of independence and with equal right. If our interests are found to clash, we may fight for supremacy and the coveted prize with teeth and claws, or with club, sword, or ironclad, and thus in the triumph of might, demon-strate our animal origin, and what physical science now-a-days calls the survival of the fittest. By-and-bye we begin to look deeper and to climb higher. We remember that life is sweet to all, and that the weak have rights that the strong are not only bound to respect, but that the brave will also defend. Thereupon we amend our declaration of independence, and it now reads in this wise: I have the right to do as I please, provided I do not prevent another from doing as he pleases. My declaration of independence has now become a code of ethics, for over against my own selfish interests are placed the interests of others. The principle of egotism now stands face to face with the principle of altruism. The selfish man who lives near the animal plane, may have outgrown the use of teeth and claws, and may conceal or disguise his club, while he triumphs over the weak for the benefit of self. Such an one reads his code of ethics in this wise: How little can I relinquish, how much can I appropriate to myself in safety, without massing the weak against me, and without losing my respectability or getting into the clutches of the law? The altruistic individual reads the same code of ethics borne of compromise in this way: How much can I bestow upon others and still have all that I actually need for myself? These two classes of persons standing upon the same code of ethics thus face opposite ways. The ideal world to the selfish man is one in which neither law nor gospel will interfere with his greed, and he is hardly aware that his face is set toward the animal world, where teeth and claws determine the empire of might, and on the animal plane the survival of the fittest. Such an one will often claim to be a gentleman and profess the Christian religion.

To the altruistic man or woman the ideal world is one in which neither law nor gospel are longer necessary, for the wise and strong are there, the almoners of the divine, the very hand of Providence to the poor, the weak, the helpless, and the despairing, and who thus fulfil the law of Christ, "Bear ye one another's burdens."

Here are two ideals diametrically opposite, two principles for ever at war with each other, and the theatre of battle is the individual soul of man and the life of humanity. Personify these ideals and they are Christ and Satan, for ever wrestling with man for the empire of his soul. Read the scriptures and read the human soul in the light of these, and Christ will be found to be the embodiment of altruism, as Satan that of egoism. Each is an ideal, the one placed over against the other, that man may not err in his choice of methods or of ends. Christ is lifted up and draws all men unto him through the sympathy and love of his divine beneficence; Satan is cast down, and drags mankind after him through their participation in his supreme selfishness. These are ideals of the divine and the animal in man, and these two strive in him for the possession of his will, his conscience, and his life. And now, my hearers, I ask you, where stands the Genius of Christendom as to this empire of the soul of man and the life of humanity? How stands the Genius of Christendom in relation to the law of Christ? Intellectual belief, sensuous emotion, and sentimentality, may be exercised in the name of Satan, and are often found masquerading as his prime ministers. All these may also pertain only to the surface of things, like the rise and fall of tides, or like the waves that come and go on the surface of the sea. The law of Christ converts the cesspool of animal egotism and innate selfishness into the translucent waters of life, that reveal alike the pearls beneath, and mirror the everlasting orbs above.

Christendom to-day, like the Jews of old, misinterprets and misapplies the law of Christ. The kingdom of Christ is not of this world, for it is within the soul of man, when the Satan of selfishness, like the tables of the money-changers, has been driven out. It is, indeed, not a worldly, but a Divine kingdom. To refer this Divine kingdom to the far-away Heaven somewhere in the still eternities, is to deprive humanity of its blessedness here and now; and to worship the religion of Christ as a fetich, and to ignore and pervert His law, can but dishonour Christ and degrade man. Intellectual beliefs, theological disputations, and all the paraphernalia of sacerdotalism, have often exhibited man's greed and selfishness in an almost unprecedented degree, and it has often happened that the one principle which was the very genius of Christ has been entirely forgotten and had to shift for itself. Professed believers in Christ have fought like very devils, unmindful that no lover of Christ could hate his

fellow-men. Diverse intellectual beliefs are an absolute necessity to man, the very basis of his personal existence. As well might the will of man attempt to control the winds of heaven or the waves of the sea, as his intellectual *belief*, and yet this is just the task that sacerdotalism has attempted. Sects have multiplied and sacerdotalism gone to pieces. No longer able to control the outer life of man by its authority, or to longer persecute for heresy, sacerdotalism clamours for subsidy, and thus the genius of Christendom has secularized Christianity, making Christ's kingdom a kingdom of this world, rich and powerful in money and lands, and in revenues the envy of princes. The genius of Christendom is thus a civil and temporal power despised by the masses, while its jurisdiction over matters in a future world is treated with derision. The doctrine of rewards and punishments which has been allowed to usurp the place of justice, is denied for lack of jurisdiction. The genius of Christendom, being convicted of worldliness on the one hand and of shamming other worldliness on the other, has lost the hold it once had on the masses, for saint and sinner seem to enter with equal zeal into the strife for the good things of this world, and instead of religion existing for the benefit of man, man is supposed to exist for the benefit of religion. In thus secularizing religion and trying to hold both worlds, the genius of Christendom holds neither, for it has changed fronts without changing names. Intellectually the result is materialism; Spiritually the result is nihilism. The god of the people is the golden calf. I do not say this is true of all churches, but is it not true in all churches, as out of all? It may thus be seen that the principle of rewards and punishments applied on the principle of favouritism, has been allowed to usurp the law of justice: worldliness, and other worldliness, have lost sight of the law of Christ. This law is said to be so plain that a man, though a fool, need not err therein, and yet it has been so obscured by theology, and so set at naught by sacerdocy as to escape recognition by the masses of men and women, and even of the majority of those who profess Christianity. As secular organizations, many churches are neither better nor worse than others. In the bestowal of charities the members are neither more nor less liberal than others outside of all church organizations, and so far as they are held in communion by intellectual beliefs and mutual interests measured by money, just so far they are not in any essential sense Christian.

Formerly the test for membership was creed rather than character. Now the formulated intellectual belief is by no means so rigidly enforced provided one pays a liberal pew-rent, and is able to move in good "society." So long as these things are allowed to take the place of the deeper convictions of the soul, and to

usurp the place of the law of Christ, just so long will they be a reproach upon the distinctive name they bear. All these things are of human origin. Whenever real earnest striving after the higher life and the exercise of the spirit of altruism shall constitute the bond of fellowship, some now in the churches will no doubt go out, and millions now out may be gathered in. Whether such an opportunity be desirable or not, let those determine who hold the keys, but let them cease complaining that they cannot reach the masses. When the churches become Christian they can convert the world.

There is a large and growing class in every community that stands squarely opposed to the churches, though seldom presenting an organized front. The great majority of these were born under so-called Christian influences and have been at some time communicants, in Christian churches, but unable to master the intricacies of theology, they have at length renounced all allegiance to organized forms of religion and are likely to deny whatsoever the churches affirm. A large number of these are, or believe themselves to be, materialists. Witnessing the indifference to spiritual things among large numbers of nominal Christians, and witnessing their zeal and success in the pursuit of worldly things, the materialist is confirmed in his disregard of all religions and in time comes to look upon them all as shams. Even the churches have not escaped this blight of materialism, for the number of their members who are in doubt as to the continuance of conscious life beyond the grave is very large, as any public medium can testify. Whether spiritualism be true or false, it has blocked the wheels of materialism, and at least encouraged the hope of immortality, which mammon worship is fast crushing out. The work actually accomplished at this point by spiritualism can hardly be overestimated. The beginnings of spiritualism were necessarily crude, and its progress has been hampered by ignorance and fraud, yet thousands who profess to regard it with scorn and contempt have nevertheless consulted mediums on the sly, and other thousands have listened to the recitals of "wonderful coincidents," as they have been termed, with absorbing interest. Materialism is not a crime, but it is the greatest misfortune that can happen to an individual and the greatest blight that can fall on a community. Consciously or unconsciously, man always builds towards his ideals, and whenever these fail beyond the things of sense and time, and are anchored solely to material things, they belittle the life of man and degrade his soul. So long as man aspires to something higher, his aspiration is like wings to his soul, and he may be conscious of the ether, even while he grovels in the mud. Shorn of all aspirations for higher and better things, and looking upon death as a finality, selfishness and greed seize upon the soul, and with a wail of despair it cries: "Let us eat,

drink, and be merry, for to-morrow we die." Life thus becomes but the sickening dance of death.

In all so-called communications with disincarnated intelligences, two factors are involved. There is the medium or seer at one end of the line, and a spirit intelligent is supposed to be at the other. We need not here stop to consider the truth or falsity of this theory as to such communications as are received. Everyone who has given the subject careful and intelligent examination is convinced that genuine psychic phenomena actually occur, and that these phenomena are not satisfactorily explained on any known law of matter or theory of modern psychology. Taking now such genuine cases as no suspicion of fraud or collusion can possibly assail, and we may profitably consider the following suggestion. In all these cases there is an incarnated soul or human intelligence at this end of the line, and this is the point for profitable investigation. The sensitive or medium possesses qualities and exercises powers that are not the common possession of mankind to any large degree, and there is a very wide difference among sensitives as to degree and quality of manifestations. It is furthermore recognised among intelligent spiritualists that the general surroundings, mode of life, condition of health, and spiritual aims and ideals largely determine the character of all messages and phenomena purporting to come from the spirit world. Beyond the general condition requisite for increasing the sensitiveness of the medium, or unfolding this power of a natural sensitive, and that usually only in a limited degree, little has been learned as to the laws governing psychic phenomena. Just at this point lies the most promising and the most legitimate field for experiment and observation. If, instead of trusting to chance, and proceeding blindly, as is too often done, a strict guard were instituted over the life of the sensitive, greater certainty and a far higher character might be given to all psychic phenomena coming from such sources. The opened vision would thus be admitted to higher planes and a clearer atmosphere. Mediumship may be a blessing or a curse to an individual. The individual whose life is habitually low, and who is anchored to the selfish and sensual plane, should avoid the subjective state as he would avoid leprosy, for obsession, insanity, and suicide lie that way, and every pure-minded person should avoid such mediums for a like reason. With better knowledge of the nature called sensitive, and the conditions under which the psychic gift can be developed and exercised, will also come a different class of communications, and also different interpretations of the whole range of psychic phenomena. When the transcendent powers and possibilities of man here on earth are better understood, it will be seen that many phenomena attributed to disincarnated spirits

belong to man himself. Whenever the development of the psychic sense moves upward to the plane of open vision, the so-called spirit-controls will hardly be sought and seldom allowed. No sensitive will then submit to an unknown force and be liable thereby to such obscessions as are now sometimes witnessed. Only the development of open vision with full consciousness can reveal the real nature of the so-called control and the result of such possessions. One thing is very certain, and that is, that every time a sensitive submits to such control, whether it be good or bad, it weakens the will and renders subsequent control far more easy and irresistible. It may be seen from these meagre outlines, that the laws governing the psychic nature of man, and the relation of the individual to the objective and the subjective planes, are matters of the very first importance.

It is a well-known principle in human nature that no partial or one-sided development can ever be lasting or satisfactory. Whenever any one faculty of man is developed out of all proportion to the rest, the result is weakening rather than strengthening to the whole being. The strength of a chain is only equal to its weakest link, and the real power of a human being consists in the elevation and harmonious relations of every faculty of both body and soul. One-sided development is always a deformity. If, therefore, anyone seeks psychic development in safety and in any high degree, he must move bodily to higher planes. Psychic development thus pursued becomes the journey of the soul toward divinity. In this upward journey of the soul at a certain stage of development, clair-audience and clairvoyance come as a natural result. The conscious soul of man having outgrown the bounds of matter, space, and time, as we understand these terms, will enter consciously into super-sensitive states and ethereal worlds, by the harmony of its own nature and the gifts of the spirit, and be as much at home there as here. Such a result is no doubt the destiny, and should be the aim of every aspiring soul of man and woman, and when this condition is obtained, the kingdom of heaven within the soul will but epitomize the celestial kingdom. It may thus be seen that the true progress of man consists in his rising toward divinity rather than in attempts to drag disincarnated souls down into matter and to our own lower level. Divinity comes to us, only as we rise toward divinity.

Altruism is that principle which determines the ethical relations of individuals on the human plane, and which more than all else raises man toward divinity. The word charity has been so misinterpreted and misapplied that it has lost its original meaning, such meaning, for example, as was given to it in the sermon on the mount. Charity is not comprehended in throwing a few shillings or articles of food and clothing to a class of unfortunates whom we are also in the habit of regarding as

inferior, and with whom we would regard it as improper to associate in any other way. That charity which suffers long and is kind, and which covers a multitude of sins, is not thus easily satisfied, though such exercise of charity may be better than none. In a higher sense, charity is a consideration for others, coupled with a modest estimation of our own virtues and a determination to get rid of all our vices; and all our vices spring from selfishness, which is exactly the opposite of altruism. Those who are rich and prosperous, and whose lines have fallen in pleasant places are apt to thank God that they are not as other men. If these are asked to imagine themselves in the place of the poor and the unfortunate, and so to remember those in bondage as bound with them, they are likely to respond, "these misfortunes are not mine, and therefore do not concern me." Considering that providence has favoured them more than others, they also conceive that they have somehow deserved more. Beneficent opportunity thus ministers to pride and self-conceit, and by withholding genuine charity from others, we thus degrade ourselves. If our position here and now has really been determined by merit earned somewhere previously, and the accounts were to be again adjusted, many of us would find the tables turned, and the balance on the debit side, and that by misusing larger opportunities and selfishly appropriating to ourselves that which has only been entrusted to us as the almoners of Providence, we have become unfaithful stewards. It is thus that selfishness always defeats self, and by withholding good from others we lose sight of our own highest good. The principle of altruism is the law of Christ. The entire life and sayings of Jesus ring the changes on the principle of altruism from the nativity to the crucifixion. Take, for example, the Parable of the Good Samaritan, and the test therein applied to determine who was brother to him that fell among thieves. See how indifference on the one side and caste prejudice on the other have been held up to reproach for nearly two thousand years. See what pains Christ continually took to divert attention from himself, and to direct it to the transcendent principle of altruism, the brotherhood of Man, and then see how we have made a fetich of his name and uncomprehended divinity, and forgotten the lesson that he taught. We have wrangled over creeds, split hairs on theological definitions, and cut each others throats while professing brotherhood in the name of the Lord. The ideal of Christendom to-day is the golden calf. No mere transient intellectual belief formulated into a creed can possibly take the place of the law of Christ, nor can soul-less and God-less materialism inspire the soul of man with any strong and lasting determination to strive towards a divine ideal. The ritualist has obscured and finally lost the divine ideal. The materialist denies that it ever existed. Between pure and unadulterated worldliness

on the one hand, and playing at other worldliness on the other, materialistic nihilism goes marching on and seems likely to have a final conflict with obscession and insanity. Human nature may be becoming refined without becoming elevated, nor is the communication supposed to have been established between human beings here, and the denizens of other worlds, necessarily a refining and elevating process. If certain crude spiritualists make the mistake of regarding all communications and manifestations occurring in the presence of a supposed medium as direct emanations from the spirit world, another class of far more crass materialists make the greater mistake of regarding all such phenomena as due to fraud and self-deception, and the continual effort of the latter class seems to be to prove their own hypothesis, rather than to arrive at the simple truth. Fortunately there is another class holding middle ground, who are neither nihilistic nor over-credulous, and though these make less noise they nevertheless hold the balance of power. It makes all the difference in the world which way we face in viewing these all-important problems in the nature and life of man.

Modern physical science places man with his back toward divinity and his face toward the animal world. Science talks learnedly of the laws of matter and force, and believes in substantiality, yet confesses its entire ignorance of the essential nature of anything. Science points man to the conditions of heredity, environment, natural selection, and the survival of the fittest, to prove that man after all is only an improved animal. True religion places man with his back toward the animal world, and his face toward divinity, and bids him move onward and upward. Man may thus regard himself as an elevated animal or a fallen God. One thing is very certain: and that is, that man advances toward liberty and light, and unfolds the divine nature in his own soul, only as he puts behind him his animal instincts and innate selfishness, and thus may he rise from height to height of being. But he who is content to face forever toward his animal origin, and who steadfastly denies the divinity within him, and that any higher planes of conscious being are possible to man, cannot expect to rise higher than his ideals, more than a fountain can rise higher than its source. Man must indeed feel the germs of a higher life stirring within him, and open his soul to the divine light, before the seed can sprout with promise and potency of flower and fruit. To deny and repudiate one's divine heritage is doubtless the surest way to alienate and destroy it. Consciousness is the basis, and experience the way of the higher life of the soul, just as they are also related to the sensuous life of the body; and the divine spirit of altruism, or the law of Christ, defines the terms, and points out the way, by which the divinity in man may become

the genius of his life. The creeds and rituals of the world have for untold ages hung like a crown of thorns on the brow of charity. Charity has been recommended and its beauties extolled, while creeds have been enforced by anathema and by the sword. Against this incubus, bearing the name of religion, the law of Christ has had to make such headway as it could. Mammon worship and materialism may justly be called the genius of Christendom to-day, for these are found in the churches as out of them. On the other hand, the law of Christ struggling everywhere and at all times for recognition, and for ever at war with the innate selfishness of man, is also found exemplified by the practice of charity and helpfulness, both in the churches and outside of all such organizations. Charity is not the distinctive characteristic of the nominal Christian, for the simple reason that it has never in modern times been made the test of fellowship. The test applied has been assent to an intellectual form of belief, and yet every so-called saint, recognised as such beyond the canons of the Church, by his daily life among the poor, has been pre-eminent in deeds of charity and sympathy with the afflicted children of men. In other words, orthodoxy has never been made to depend upon charity. Orthodoxy has been considered essential, and charity incidental. Christ made charity essential, and orthodoxy incidental, and plainly declares by precept and example, that whatever else we have, and have not charity, we have nothing, and it is thus that we have allowed the commandments of men to usurp the commandments of God, and set at nought the law of Christ. Charity does indeed exist among nominal Christians, but in spite of orthodoxy, not as a result of that which is termed evangelical and orthodox, and while texts of scripture may be so grouped as to prove orthodoxies innumerable, the law, the life, and the genius of Christ is charity through and through, and this is the one principle that brings men together as brothers, and is to redeem the world.

There have been in all ages not only individuals who saw clearly this distinction, but organizations of noble men and women have been formed, not only for the purpose of exercising this divine principle of altruism, but to stand as living witnesses that this is the law of Christ. These have ever insisted that intellectual beliefs are a matter of temperament, inheritance, and education, and necessarily changing, and in no sense essential. These have also held that that faith in justice and right that is born of charity, has power to transform the life, as it informs the consciousness of man, and that in this way only can selfish man become Christ-like. The basis of these organizations has been the essential Brotherhood of man, which is but another name for the application of the law of Christ to all human relations, the practical outward living of

the faith of the soul. How little this principle of Universal Brotherhood is understood by the masses of mankind, how seldom its transcendent importance is recognised, may be seen in the diversity of opinion and fictitious interpretations regarding the Theosophical Society. This society was organized on this one principle, the essential Brotherhood of Man, as herein briefly outlined, and imperfectly set forth. It has been assailed as Buddhistic and anti-Christian, as though it could be both these together, when both Buddhism and Christianity, as set forth by their inspired founders, make brotherhood the one essential of doctrine and of life. Theosophy has been also regarded as something new under the sun, or at best as old mysticism masquerading under a new name. While it is true that many societies founded upon, and united to support, the principles of altruism, or essential brotherhood, have borne various names, it is also true that many have also been called theosophic, and with precisely the same principles and aims as the present society bearing that name. With these societies one and all, the essential doctrine has been the same, and all else has been incidental, though this does not obviate the fact that many persons are attracted to the incidentals who overlook or ignore the essentials. It must not, however, be conceived that these so-called incidentals are unimportant. Christ predicted that certain signs should follow them that believed, and if any further evidence were needed to show that this word "believe" has been misunderstood, it can be found in the fact that no so-called believers possess the signs. This fact is, however, explained away by assuming that the statement of Christ had reference only to his early disciples, an explanation rendered necessary by lack of signs in professed believers. Now if we imagine that one had come to Christ with the proposition that if he would guarantee that the disciple should be taught to heal the sick and raise the dead he would believe, thus stipulating rewards on the principle of cent. per cent., it would not be difficult to imagine what answer such an one would have received. Such an one would have proven himself incompetent to exercise the faith to which Christ referred, which must be the spontaneous and unreserved gift of the soul, rather than a matter of bargain and sale, altruistic and not selfish. Now in every one of the societies to which I have referred, it was known and declared, and more or less exemplified, that "these signs follow" the faithful, as the gift of the spirit, as the natural result of the exercise of the law of Christ. That which follows as a natural result of well-doing, may, in a certain sense, be regarded as a reward for well-doing, but such reward is based on the principle of justice, and in no sense is a matter of favouritism. Therefore the essential thing for man is the life

that leads to the above-named results, but these results are essential to the principle of justice, and are beneficent to humanity, whose servant the obedient soul has become. There have been those in the Theosophical Societies, both of the past and the present time, who have coveted these spiritual powers, and who were willing to exercise just so much of the principle of altruism as they imagined necessary to secure them, thus showing themselves incapable either of obtaining any powers except of a very low and questionable order, or of appreciating the philosophy and the divine science upon which the progress of man toward divinity always and everywhere depends. Neither the indifferent, the Nihilistic, nor the time-serving, will live the life essential to a knowledge of the true doctrine and the unfolding of the transcendent powers of the soul. It is in relation to these powers as the result of an altruistic life and a continual aspiration toward divinity that psychic phenomena comes into the present consideration. Psychic phenomena may be indifferent, egotistic, or altruistic, according as they are governed by no motive springing from constitutional peculiarities, and indulged from mere curiosity, or as the motive is good or bad. This fact shows that the nature of man may be refined without being elevated, and this refinement may lead downward. On the other hand, the altruistic life is always an elevating process, and such elevation of spirit inevitably tends to the refinement of individual life. Of this altruistic life it was said of old that it has the promise of that which now is and of that which is to come. The Theosophical Society seeks no proselytes, and promises no rewards or favors to its members or fellows. Membership in this Society assures neither knowledge nor salvation. The Society stands squarely on the principle of Universal Brotherhood, and proclaims the law of Christ and the result that everywhere follows the altruistic life. It stands as a witness of the truth, the one truth proclaimed by Buddha and by Christ, and by every truth seer throughout the ages. People may hear or forbear to hear, may enter the society or remain outside as seemeth to them best. Not from the indifference, independence, or arrogance of the few thousand who constitute the society, but from the knowledge of the fact that neither persuasion nor coercion can ever turn an indifferent soul toward the light, or induce an obdurate soul to forsake and despise darkness. Neither will anyone deserving the name of theosophist be found boasting of his own gifts, for the highest Mahatma realizes that he has only begun to learn wisely and well the infinite mystery of being, and the neophyte is admitted as such because of his teachableness and desire for the simple truth. The most that any theosophist will say is, that he has learned the way, entered the path, and seen the light, and that henceforth

he desires nothing else but to advance along the "small old path," the "narrow way."

No human being capable of receiving truth in any fair measure or high degree, will ever attempt to monopolize or conceal it. The same faculty that enables us to appreciate truth, makes us desirous of using it for the benefit of man. That which passes for the truth and is subject to traffic and labelled merchandise in the intellectual or the so-called spiritual markets of the world, is not truth, but opinion. Opinion is to truth what the rippling waves of the ocean are to the rising and falling tides. The one babbles to the wind, the other thrills with the pulse-beats of the world. If the relation of theosophy to the religions of the world has been misconceived and misjudged, its relation to Spiritualism have been equally misinterpreted. If theosophy stands for the great central fact in Christianity, the law of Christ, but discards the obscurations and false interpretations of man that only obscure that law, so in regard to psychic phenomena, it accepts the facts but questions and often denies the conclusions, and places other interpretations on many phenomena. Whenever the reasons for these different interpretations are carefully examined, and dispassionately weighed, they are seldom scorned, though they may not always be accepted. True Theosophy is the core of true religion and the key to all psychic phenomena. As to mediumship and all psychic manifestations, the position of the Theosophist may be thus stated. When we know more of the real nature and transcendent powers of man here on earth, and in the body, we shall not only enter broader realms and higher degrees of psychic displays, but we shall put a different interpretation on much that we now find confused and misleading, and there are those in the T. S. who already possess this larger knowledge.

This knowledge is not withheld from any who desire and who will prove worthy to receive and competent to understand it. For the past two or three centuries there has been very great intellectual advancement and material progress, but it is not generally realized that all such progress is altogether one-sided and incomplete. The great majority of persons, even among the upright and intelligent, seem to be entirely ignorant of the fact that man possesses also a spiritual nature equally subject to cultivation with his mind and body, and yet altogether transcending these. Failing thus to recognise even the existence of his spiritual power and divine nature, it is seldom that any well-directed efforts are made to enlarge the sphere and develop the power of man's higher nature. To most persons it is quite inconceivable that man may be very highly developed physically and intellectually, and yet be spiritually a barbarian. Yet such is the fact. Even among the Spiritualists, only the more advanced

thinkers seemed to have realized this fact. The great bulk of so-called spirit communications even when of a high order intellectually, which is rather the exception, do not enter the higher realms at all. This is stated as a fact, rather than a criticism, but the sooner the fact is realized in all its bearings, the greater the spiritual advancement likely to follow. The demonstration of the fact that conscious existence continues beyond the grave is a great comfort to the sorrowing and a consolation to the despairing, but such knowledge may be the reverse of elevating, as the records of spiritualism show. Every thoughtful and aspiring soul is aware that something more is needed to inspire the life, elevate the aims, and purify the ideals of man here on earth. It is generally admitted by all communications supposed to come from the departed, that retribution in some form follows the evil-doer beyond the veil, but the old orthodox idea of heaven and hell everywhere now so modified as to be scarcely recognised, is in these communications almost universally denied, and it cannot be denied that this has often led to license, instead of to that liberty through which the soul aspires to the truth as it inspires the diviner life. There is no lack of facts and materials from which to construct a science of psychology and a true philosophy of spiritual life, but these materials are disorderly, often contradictory, and hence seldom lead to lasting results and orderly living. Most persons, even among the so-called liberal, still cling to authority. They have, indeed, repudiated authority in one form, only to turn to it, perhaps unconsciously, in another. Very few persons seem able to judge of any matter solely on its merits. This is because few persons keep the windows of their souls open to the truth, and are willing and anxious to accept truth from any source and from every quarter. Those who boast that they have long ago discarded the orthodox religious labels, are still ready to indorse the orthodox scientific, the orthodox spiritualistic, or the orthodox materialistic label. It hence follows that the source of a doctrine or a fact is carefully regarded, before the doctrine or fact is regarded at all. If instead of estimating truth by its messenger, we were to estimate the messenger by the truth he brings, and so really to judge the tree by its fruit it bears, we should find the recognition of truth far easier, and obtain it also in far greater measure than we do now. But this is not all, for we should also avoid many unjust judgments and much of repentance though scorning the messengers of truth. Never until man holds his soul open to the truth as the flower opens its pencilled cup to the dew and sunlight of heaven, can he expect it to bear the fragrance and reflect the beauty of the divine life from the great spiritual sun.

Our Western civilization, crudely designated as Christendom, is by no means Christian in the highest sense, nor will the creeds and rituals of

man ever make it so. These creeds are so divided and so at war with each other that they have long ceased to minister to that power and compactness which once presented a solid front capable of wielding secular and temporal dominion. As a mere matter of fact, coincident with the multiplication of sects and creeds, there has arisen in every direction humanitarian enterprises for the relief of the poor and for bettering the condition of the lower classes. I therefore hold that the law of Christ is steadily advancing into the life of Christendom, and that the councils of the Infinite are thus demonstrated to be higher and more powerful than the councils of man. This is the transformation that is slowly being wrought out in the life of humanity, and it is by no means an indifferent matter with us an individuals. We may retard this onward march of the race, we may be blind and indifferent to it, or we may intelligently and zealously advance it. If we are really inspired by the spirit of altruism we need not wait for the churchman to abandon the last stronghold of creed, but we will join him in every good word and work for the elevation of man and the uplifting of humanity. The actual and universal brotherhood of man is the idea aimed at; mutual toleration of differences in beliefs, mutual helpfulness, mutual work for the elevation of the whole human race. If we are seeking the causes of disease, insanity, crime, and death, we may find them one and all in the innate selfishness of man; and if we are seeking the remedy for all these we may find it in the law of Christ. Whenever our eyes are sufficiently opened by charity and just recognition of truth, wherever it may be found, we shall also discover that this law of Christ is also the law of Buddha, and that in one form or another it has been the core of all the world's great religions. It is thus that the Infinite Father of all souls has disregarded the barriers erected in all times by the selfishness of man, and has come to every nation, people and time, and bestowed the gift of His spirit in such measure and in such form as they were ready and willing to receive. A broader charity will thus teach us that the divine light is not a rushlight to be hid under a bushel, but like the rains and dews of heaven that descend on the just and on the unjust, and like the great orb of day that shines for all, so also the divine light of the Father's face beams on all His children, and the divine voice whispers in every soul, and its message is the Brotherhood of Man. Christ said, "I was hungry, and ye fed me; naked, and ye clothed me; sick, and in prison, and ye visited me; inasmuch as ye did it to the least of these my brethren, ye did it unto me." Place over against this one saying, the human creeds of all the ages, and the intellectual gymnastics of the whole human race, and see how utterly insignificant they become in the presence of this announce-

ment of the law of Charity and the Universal Brotherhood of Man, and then contend for a creed that makes brothers aliens, and dooms more than half the human race to perdition if you will, but don't, I beg of you, for the sake of common intelligence and common honesty call it Christian. Let us no longer insult the Man of Sorrows who proclaimed the brotherhood of man and preached the gospel to the poor; who called the Magdalen sister, and declared that the dying thief should with him enter paradise.

I am unorthodox enough to believe that the spiritual powers of man are just what Christ declared them to be, and that he knew and declared openly the signs of spiritual power that follow—not mere intellectual belief—but that living faith that transforms the life, elevates the soul, and opens the spiritual faculties of man, and that these gifts of the spirit and powers of the soul are latent, and waiting development in every human being. I furthermore believe that not only the Bible, but the sacred books of all religions, and more or less the initiations into ancient mysteries include this same knowledge and point out the method of attaining to this illumination. No man ever found this great truth, or attained to this illumination who like a mole burrowed in the earth, and hemmed in his soul with narrow bounds, and turned his back to every ray of light that refused to shine through his own selfish lense. To obtain this illumination man must indeed be a brother to every soul that suffers, and to every spirit that aspires; and he must open his soul to the divine ray and climb toward it with all his strength, with all his mind, and with every faculty of his soul. Christ thus becomes for every man and every woman, the way, the truth, and the life.

One may criticise a practice without condemning an individual, and it is in this spirit that the foregoing criticisms have been made. Only in this way could that which is held to be true be contrasted with that which is held to be false. It is, indeed, an easy matter to understand the meaning of the law of Christ, but a very hard matter to apply it to daily life, for it comes into continual conflict with the innate selfishness of man and begets continual warfare. If man would at once relinquish self, the victory would be won. As this theatre of the conflict between selfishness and altruism is the soul of man, man is therefore at war with himself. The God in man is at war with the Satan in man, and the former triumphs only as the latter is put under foot and driven out. The peace that passes all understanding comes to man when he relinquishes self, when his members no longer war with each other, but when the God in him becomes all and in all.

# UNIVERSAL BROTHERHOOD:

By ALEXANDER FULLERTON.

# THE SCIENTIFIC BASIS OF OCCULTISM:

By HERBERT CORYN.

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# PRACTICAL THEOSOPHY.

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# UNIVERSAL BROTHERHOOD.

*(A paper read before the Aryan T.S. of New York, by Alexander Fullerton.)*

THE term "Universal Brotherhood" is obviously an extension to the whole human family of the idea in the word "brother," a child of the same parents as is oneself. It suggests at once the thought of equal rights, common interests, mutual affection, and responsive care. Moreover, it incites an exhilarating conception of what might be the state of things throughout the earth if family tenderness were the law of all life, if race and tribal animosities were ended, and if everyone felt a wrong perpetrated on a foreigner as keenly as if perpetrated on a relation. This is the true view of human solidarity, and a vivid apprehension of it would abolish national wars, social outrages, and personal injustice. Its unlimited influence in securing peace and good-will was seen by the founders of the Theosophical Society, and they proclaimed it as the very first of their and its aims, not as a gracious sentiment, not as a pleasing phrase, but as a principle of action, a means of social regeneration. If we did not believe in it, there would be no Aryan society, there would be no meeting to-night.

And yet the very fact that it is a principle and not a sentiment warrants some examination into its nature. If a principle, it must have a root, must sustain analogy to other principles, must be capable of practical uses, and also must be subject to limitations and just restrictions. As the term "Universal Brotherhood" is derivative, we may properly look for these in the primary, and thus infer facts as to the universal human family from facts in the domestic families which epitomize it.

Now, when we come to search for that which constitutes the cohesive influence in a family, we shall find it, I think, to be none other than that which constitutes cohesive influence anywhere else—affinity. It cannot be the mere fact of relationship. That is altogether casual. We do not select our relations, any more than we select our temperament. Nor can it be the closeness of association That is quite as likely to arouse hostility as friendship; and, indeed, the peculiar bitterness of family quarrels is proverbial. Nor can it be the consciousness of common parentage, for the parents may be distasteful and anything but a source of harmony. Nor can it be the likeness of disposition, for the dissimilarity of traits in children is notorious. Nor is it any necessary oneness of interest, for

interests in a household are very apt to be conflicting and to excite animosity. Nor need it be an instinct of union against aggressors, for that would only operate in barbarous communities or those under feudal laws.

But if it is no one of these things, what is it? Here, again, we must peer into actual families and so learn. Our own observation will show us that, where the family tie is very strong, it is where the members have the same tastes, ideas, pursuits, aims. Where the family tie is loose, it is where the members have variant convictions, differ in likes and habits, hold to separate standards of faith or duty. Where certain members are in one group and certain others in a second, it is seen that in each case some common sympathy—in opinion, taste, what not—cements the units. And where, as is not infrequently the case, some one member is unlike the rest, and finds his associates wholly without the domestic circle, it is because the family character is not his, and his social wants must be met elsewhere. There is no mystery in any of this; it is all an illustration of the workings of affinity. And affinity, as every Occult student insists, is like every other force, far stronger in the immaterial regions of mind and soul than on the material plane of flesh and blood. In other words, the attraction between two sympathetic souls is incomparably more powerful than that between two bodies which happen to have had the same parents.

But what, still further, is the ground-work for this affinity? Analyzing affinities, we find that all such as are purely selfish or distinctly bad in quality can be but transient. That rogues will sooner or later fall out is a maxim, but it is no less true that associations for self-interest are fragile just in the degree that each party feels his own interest to be supreme. Conversely, the enduring ties are those between men of finer mould, where principle has recognition and force, where high sentiments of justice and generosity rule, where, in short, egoism is subordinated to altruism. The unity subsisting between the sympathetic members of a household must have its root in such qualities, or it will not last long. The only security for the continuance of affinities is, therefore, in the *goodness* of each party.

If these are the facts in a domestic circle, they must be the facts in the universal human family, the "Brotherhood" of which Theosophy speaks. Affinity determines the coherence of its particles. We do not expect the sage to consort with the fool, the intelligent to delight in the stupid, the broad-minded to sympathize with the petty, the refined with the rough, the generous with the mean, the tactful with the blundering, the cheery with the gruntling Mrs. Gummidges, the high principled with the low principled. Like naturally, and very properly, seeks like. The mere fact that two men each possess a human nature is not of itself a very strong bond, for they may not agree as to what constitutes human nature, or as to its really valuable qualities, or as to the aim of existence or how it is to be pursued. The affinity, and therefore the attraction, begins where a similar opinion, taste, desire, faculty manifests itself, when, as we say, they have

"something in common." There must be somewhat of interest in a person, or he will not be interesting.

So also, in the human brother as in the family brother, the duration of the attraction depends upon the goodness of it. There is every variety of cohesion, from the slight and ephemeral relations on the lowest planes of life to the lofty intimacies of noble souls, such as are immortalized by history in the case of Damon and Pythias, and by sacred writings in the case of Jesus and St. John—may I not add the case of those two exalted beings whom Theosophists revere as the unseen prompters of their own Society, but whose names they do not lightly voice?

Let it be understood most unflinchingly that Theosophy demands from each man to all men equal rights, constant courtesy, respect for feelings, kindly consideration, unstinting justice, ready help, unselfish effort. One unerring test of the Theosophic spirit is its persistency in according all these things. It is always the case, however, that the sentiment has to be bridled by reason, and the history of all philanthropic efforts shows that they are futile, if not injurious, where they defy considerations of equal reality, or ignore laws which are just as demonstrable as sympathies. Theosophy would be unique in human experience if it ran no such risks, or if it were always presented with the cool and balanced judgment of well-trained thinkers. Those of you who are *au courant* with Theosophical writings know how constantly the faculty of discrimination must be kept in use, and with what care one has to guard against faulty argument, or extreme positions, or one-sided statements. The doctrine of Universal Brotherhood is particularly an illustration, for it is a noble thought in itself, it inspires rich pictures of future possibilities, and it holds just the sentiment which to a half-thinker appears unlimited in its scope. Hence, we encounter representations of it sometimes effusive, sometimes dogmatic, sometimes extravagant, very rarely such as are judicious and impartial.

Now, in a general way, it may be said that no theory can be correct which of necessity contravenes any laws or facts clearly demonstrated. While the doctrine of Universal Brotherhood may be true, any particular exposition of its use is but a theory, and, as such, is subject to this criterion. We know for instance that justice, truth, the welfare of society, the operation of certain habits in social life, the superiority of principle to impulse, are *facts*, and that it is a law that they cannot be disregarded without harm. Any plan purporting to disregard them and yet avoid the harm traverses this law, and so, whatever plausibility it may wear is really fallacious.

A true theory of Universal Brotherhood, one which takes in these and cognates facts and laws, has nothing to fear when confronted with them. But it is in that confronting, that the error of a mistaken theory is brought to view, and, as "there is no religion higher than truth," we Theosophists should rejoice in any process which discloses illusion or confirms reality.

Let us take an illustration. We not infrequently meet the assertion that, because all men are brothers, tenderness is the only fitting treatment for them. This assumes seven things; (1) that all kinds of conduct are entitled to one kind of return; (2) that the same result is produced on unlike characters by a like treatment; (3) that the cultivation of a sense of justice is to be reserved for public officials, and has no place in private development; (4) that no collateral evils result from unmerited sympathy; (5) that we are wiser than Nature as she shows herself in her constant operations; (6) that a one-sided culture is better than such as is symmetrical; (7) that a common nature in the lower human principles is more important than a common interest in the higher.

Not one of these things is true. It is not the fact that the moral sense views all acts as of equal moral quality, and hence it cannot be the fact that it accords to them a like reward. It is not the fact that diverse natures respond in the same way to the same treatment, as every schoolhouse and every family can testify. It is not the fact that only judges are to cultivate and exhibit a sense of justice, for that sense—which is, indeed, the most abstract of all, the most difficult to attain, and the one indicative of the finest training—is precisely the one most effective in restraining aggression, and especially to be evolved in the interior development of every intelligent disciple. It is not the fact that indiscriminate tenderness draws no evils in its train, as may be shown by the statistics of either pauperism or criminality. It is not the fact that the sentimentalist effects more good than natural law, the whole doctrine of Karma being indirectly to the contrary. It is not the fact that we become more god-like if we educate our sympathies at the expense of our reason, and grow more rounded as we grow more flabby. It is not a fact that we are more truly at one with others because of having a fleshly body than because of a united spirit of life and truth.

Nor, indeed, is this theory borne out by the state of things in family brotherhoods. There are good brothers and bad brothers. No one claims that they are to be regarded and treated alike. Much forbearance may naturally be exercised from good-will, but there often comes an occasion when the claims of justice, the rights of others, and the well-being of a whole household require that a member shall be exiled and tabooed. Could anything be more monstrous than the claim that a brother, because a brother, was at liberty to ill-treat with impunity the rest of the family? If your brother steals your property, can he ask you to save him from jail because your brother? You would probably reply that that was a reason why he should refrain from robbing you, not a reason why he should be allowed to rob you and escape punishment. One cannot claim the privileges of a relationship while repudiating its obligations, and it would be strange indeed if, the closer the connection, the more one was at liberty to poison and outrage it.

Similarly as to the Universal Brotherhood. There are times when severity is

a necessity. The great eternal law of Right is more cogent than any sentimenta l sympathy; the stern arm of Justice cannot be paralyzed by whimperings or regrets; the far-reaching needs of the whole family are more worthy of regard than the momentary compact of a scamp. We have no *right* to sacrifice the well-behaved to the ill-behaved, to juggle with the moral sense, to reverse the moral standard and treat evil as if good. If Theosophy so taught us, it would be anything but a boon. I do not believe that it does. I do not believe that it teaches any doctrines enfeebling to the moral nerves or disastrous to the social life, and if it did, it would be contradicted by its own grand and fundamental principle—Karma, the vindication of justice.

And so it is that tenderness is not always a duty. There are occasions when in speech, in act, in co-operative function, we are to resist and rebuke our brothers who are unbrotherly. A man does not lose his claim to proper treatment by becoming a Theosophist, and if he does not lose the claim, he does not lose the right to enforce the claim. Nor, in becoming a Theosophist, does he engage to close his eyes to truth of any kind or in any quarter, or to stupefy any department of his moral system, or to encourage one-sidedness and dis-proportion. Theosophy, I take it, honours Aristides quite as truly as St. John.

"But," you will say, "what scope does this leave for the operation of the fraternal sentiment?" I reply, much every way, more than any of us will be likely to fulfil. Truth is many-sided. There is room for kindly allowance, for generous interpretation, for patience, and interest, and good-will. There is ample range for the philanthropic sentiment, for the fostering of all rich and noble charities, for the sunny beneficence which loves to shed happiness around. It by no means follows that because evil-doers have to be checked, nobody is to be cheered. If the bad forfeit your consideration, there are plenty remaining who do not. There is not the slightest danger that a benevolent spirit, however coupled with a discriminating mind, will find itself at loss for objects. If every other outlet failed, there would still be the work of the Theosophical Society, which certainly in its animus and its zeal to disseminate the most ennobling of motives cannot be surpassed in fraternal feeling. Each of us can participate in that, and so exemplify and expand the Brother principle.

Yet, as in families, so in the broad human fraternity, the instinct of affinity will work. The Theosophist does not pretend that his greatest interest is in things upon the surrounding plane. It is rather his doctrine that higher planes are equally open to aspiration and vastly richer in satisfaction. His fuller sympathies most naturally go out to those who are likeminded. As a man of letters does not find much congeniality in the ignorant or the addle-brained, so neither does an etherialized nature in such as are dull to the immaterial. In the upper regions of thought and intuition there must be livelier motions of concurrent feeling, larger ranges for common effort, more inspiring topics for mind and heart. As the developing spirit ascends to higher plateaux, it meets fewer

comrades, but it finds them more congenial. If the swarming mass of humanity remains below, it is not his fault, but theirs. He does not discard the relationship, but he detects the finer qualities of it on his own level. And should any man complain that he does not secure from the Theosophist that unlimited sympathy which the term "Universal Brotherhood" might seem to imply, the Theosophist might say to him, as the Adept says to the Theosophist, "Don't ask us to descend; come up here yourself."

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# THE SCIENTIFIC BASIS OF OCCULTISM.

To many of the readers of the following notes, the suggestions therein contained will come with no sort of novelty; but, perhaps, to some few hesitating on the banks, drawn this way by an irrepressible desire for large thinking, yet restrained by the fear of being unscientific, this essay may appeal, and to these I venture to suggest that they give a casting vote for Occultism. For the way to Occultism lies through a certain ground, common to it and to science; and standing hereon, we can look backward or forward. It is said that the man who could realize the hour of his death would in that moment die, and a corresponding paralysis must overtake our investigative efforts when we come within sight of the point from which no further avenues of knowledge open. When we see ourselves hemmed in by the blank wall of the unknowable, we shall never take the trouble to reach it. We are being dragged by science within sight of a line of finality; we must show that line to be the reflection upon creation of a self-limited mind that knows not its own depth. From the things that it knows, science claims to cast the horoscope of the knowable; we must show its data to be too few for the strain. The first glimpse of a new law whereon previously discrete facts can be smoothly strung, and under which they become coherent, gives the highest pleasure that can be reached; belief in the existence of a vast underlying network of such laws, the most potent of stimuli; belief that they are illimitable, range behind range, for ever more general; and belief in the correspondingly expanding powers of man to comprehend; such only can make life worth living, and the modes of expansion the only worthy study. And if to this we can add a conception of ourselves as individuals returning again and again to life with added or developed faculties and ranges of conscious comprehension, and of such wide comprehension as includes within itself the highest morality—with such beliefs we attain a platform of equanimity, and motives for action and aspiration from which we shall not be disturbed

But contrary beliefs and conceptions yield a contrary result. In opposition to this great creed, it is held that human powers and faculties will never alter in kind, and but measurably in degree; that a time will come when the broad scheme of things, so far as it is knowable, will be known, and that nothing can then remain but to turn back and make more lists of the details whose principles are fixed, complete tables of dead facts; that selfishness and altruism will find a respectable equilibrium for jogging along till the sun goes out and the worlds get even in temperature; finally, and worst, that at death the individuality dissolves for ever, and the personality gets split among the children. To the extent that the former beliefs lead to a large and enjoyed life full of motive for high action and thinking, does the latter to a small and dark one; a life weighted with the background consciousness of iron limitations. The proportion of suicides rises steadily year by year in nearly every country in Europe. Along with the obscuration of hope and the gathering belief in the extinction of self at some time, comes the determination to extinguish it now. Evolution is a widening of consciousness till it includes that of others; a growing belief in the impossibility of the extinction of consciousness; an increasing intuitive comprehension of a man's unity with the laws of things. The possibility of suicide is the negation of evolution. A man's acts are swayed according to the key-note of his octave, according to his point of arrival in the scale of evolution. If he be dead drunk, or the subject of apoplexy, his acts are but little more than those of a vegetable; advanced nerve-diseases will leave him but the functions of an animal; selfishness is frequently the premonitory symptom of insanity; certain alcohols render the impulse to suicide irresistible. Therefore, by the presence of disease, a man can be pushed *down* the scale of being and evolution, through all the grades of selfishness, *up* which in the course of development he has come, till he becomes scarcely, and then not at all, conscious of the existence of others, from that point at which the existence of others is as important to him as his own. Suicide is the consummation of selfishness, and it is this which modern thinking produces as its cream.

Taking now two aspects of Evolution, we shall say that it is an increasing loss of the dominant sense of self, an increasing share in the consciousness of others; and in the second, that it is an increasing consciousness of relationship to the forces and planes of nature. There is, as has been pointed out, no sufficient and logical reason for placing the birth of consciousness anywhere in the great scale. In all the advance in complicity both as regards grouping of cells in ganglia and other groups, and in the arrangement and number of atoms in molecules, in all this line from the mineral to the cerebral grey matter there does not seem any such suddenness in change as should entitle us to say—"herewith enters consciousness." If reaction to stimuli be the test of consciousness, then the amœba is conscious, the yeast ferment is conscious, the micro-organism of disease is conscious, and the solution of copper that takes the opportunity to

precipitate about the introduced knife is conscious. If it be said that the animal would alone be conscious, what of the little microscopic world that is equally animal and vegetable? If consciousness be called a function of nerve-matter, at what point in its specialization does the previously unspecialized embryonic cell acquire this function? The complex responses of a frog to the stimuli of life are presumably conscious; why not his simpler responses when his cord is severed? why not the still simpler electric responses of his individual muscles when their nerves are cut? why not the magnetic responses of the iron molecules therein? To draw a line anywhere in all the motions of being is warranted by nothing. Yet consciousness may perhaps be assumed to advance in degree as at distant points to appear distinct in kind; and the advance in degree is in the direction of synthesis. The stone loses nothing of its characters on being split in two; there are simply two stones. But the lopped-off branch of a tree "dies"—that is, descends nearer in the scale to a mineral; and subsequent mutilations produce but two sticks instead of one, no longer changing its mode of life; with the descent in mode of life should go a descent in complexity and coherence of its consciousness. In man is reached consciousness of himself—self-consciousness, so far, the completest unification. Must the process stop now? May there not be another mode as far above this, as this above that of the tree, and the tree above that of the mineral? We therefore conceive of the growth of consciousness as a synthesis of unit consciousnesses. If molecules live in a stone as individuals and in man as a whole, may not men, thinking and feeling now as units, grow at last to a coherence wherein they think and feel as one, overhung by and taking common share in the common consciousness of life? So far, then, evolution is loss of selfish consciousness, and to make an attempt to realize this now would be to take rank as allies with the evolving purpose of Nature.

Parallel with this line of advance, and necessarily concomitant therewith, is an increased delicacy and perfection of response, and conscious response, to all the plans of forces. For there are new forces that only take action after every new degree of the fusion of units, after every step in advance up the evolutionary grades. A ray of light affects a stone slowly, simply, invisibly, or scarcely at all; it affects a flower visibly in an hour; an electric current acts most obviously upon the highly complex molecules of protoplasm; emotion sways the lives and determines the deaths of men. What are the forces which, affecting the lower worlds slowly, simply, or not at all, affect men quickly and obviously, and what is the ultimate tendency of the effects they produce? In another aspect of the same question, what planes are superimposed upon the brute to make him a man, and what upon man to make him a god? We cannot see in the study of the universe any warrant for any limit to expansion drawn anywhere. Wherever we find a seed, we cannot but expect the fruit.

Appeal has here to be made to certain bodies of evidence to which as yet

science, or orthodox science, attaches little weight, or which it ignores. There is an unconscious and self-deceptive fraud which is apt to obtain with all of us, and which is being at this day displayed by the leaders in science towards a set of groups of facts. When we have fixed our modes of thinking and grown crusted in our places, it is useless to set before us new facts that seem to overthrow our old and somewhat time-tried principles. Of the truth of these latter we are certain, and though the new facts seem, perhaps, to conflict with them a little awkwardly, they must obviously come in ultimately under the accepted systems; meantime they can quite well stand in the cold, disregarded. The more obtrusive they become, the more studiously are they avoided, but fifty years' steady growth of spiritualistic belief is fifty years' activity of toes in large boots, and continuous deception thereby on the part of millions, who must all take rank under the two banners of the defrauders and the defrauded. This seems absurd; but the sacred repose of the theories must not be profaned. Old bottles must hold old wine. The modes of scientific investigation rest at last upon the dicta of the senses and assume, with certain corrections, the validity of sense; but the point is as to whether *all* knowledge has this basis, whether there be not some transcending the field of sense. The senses give dicta only concerning the qualities of things, not the thing possessing the qualities. Were there a hundred senses, we should know but a hundred qualities, remaining still ignorant of the substance. Are, then, all our ideas at bottom based on the evidences of the senses, recombined in ever-increasing range of abstractness? Is thought simply comparison. Are our conceptions of Time and Space simply conceptions of things respectively sequent and extended with the things disregarded, and hence derived from the senses? If this be maintained, where did we get our conception attaching to the word consciousness? This cannot be an idea arising from qualities. It cannot have entered through any of the avenues of sense, or have been abstracted from knowledge so entering. All modes of thinking and observing must assume a mental region wherein rules another lord than sense, and wherein certain primary ideas arise. In one philosophical view Space and Time are modes in which phenomena are by our own minds compelled to clothe themselves for us, are innate pre-existent ideas, arising in an occult mental region, which is not that of ordinary consciousness. The problem, then, to be solved is whether or not there be any evidence that consciousness can be shifted back into this; whether from that region it is ever possible to think. In Herbert Spencer's view Space and Time are considered to be abstract ideas, arising from things of sense, and, therefore, not innate, being abstract extension and sequence; that is to say, in the one case, the idea of size abstracted from the thing possessing size, and in the other that of succession abstracted from the events that succeed each other. Yet he postulates an underlying reality to appearances, a noumenon to phenomena, a possessor of qualities, presenting itself to, or "welling up" in consciousness by a path other

than that through the senses, or into a mental region not dominated by sense. Our problem, therefore, remains. Can the ordinary location of consciousness in the parts of the mind accessible along the avenues of sense be shifted into that inner occult sanctum wherein wells up this primary conception? As it is impossible to help postulating such a region, can we make use of our belief in it to get there? We must study the conditions under which thinking would transact itself if effected from this standpoint. There must be a ratio between the activities of this inner and the ordinary outer mind. Thought withdrawn entirely from the latter and concentrated in the former would leave the man apparently unconscious, really unconscious as regards the outer world, intensely conscious to the inner, and it is at once suggested that this is the effect of anæsthetics. Sir Humphrey Davy, recovering from anæsthesia, found himself exclaiming, "The world is ideas; ideas are the only reality." Moreover, the knowledge now open from this vantage-ground would have no relation to words, and not be expressible therein, for words deal with ideas arising out of the objective world. And if we accept the first view of Space and Time, consciousness will now have got behind their source, and will be independent of them; will, in fact, be dealing with that which *is*; not what *will be*, nor *has been*. To perfect forevision there could be no time, for all the to-come would be the now; we, limited in purview, seeing the universal picture in bits successively, reflect our limitation and call it Time. To get behind Time is to get behind limitation. Our very sense of personality comes only from living in bits of things, and to live in the All, to be co-extensive with possibility, to conceive with the universal conception, is to reach Nirvana and to know that space, time, motion, and personality are all illusion. There is no state for embodiment in words; the intenser the thinking the less can the thinker bring from his trance his thoughts. But if in the future of evolution there be held in store for man any such state as this, any such widening and deepening of consciousness, there must be some indications or evidences of the rudiments.

Occultism claims that mind has the potentiality of harmony, plane for plane, with Nature, and if this be true its correspondence with some at any rate of the psychic planes must prevail now. We must be able to show some of the steps towards this philosophically postulated indestructible conception of the noumenon behind phenomena. And it would seem obvious that this peremptory appeal from this real to the deepest recesses of mind can rest only on the fact that it *is* mind, appealing to its like. Forces act on their own plane, and the fact that they effect changes in mind shows that behind them, indicated crudely and clothed by them, the heart and reality of them *is* mind.

That any new discoveries of groups of facts fell in at once with existing scientific theories would simply prove their want of value in the dispensation of knowledge, for any theories that fail to formulate all possible facts must ultimately get killed by those that lie outside its range. "When the report of

the Paris Commission on Mesmerism of 1831 was read before the Medical Academy of Paris, an academician named Castel rose and protested against the printing thereof, because, he said, if the reported facts were true, half of our physiological science would be destroyed."* It would seem that the reported facts *were* true, and many more of an equally destructive character. The facts of mesmerism are getting too stalwart, and they are accordingly about to be received into the true fold; but the Castels are uprising in the usual disgust to offer the usual protests against the facts of spiritualism and clairvoyance. A proper study of mesmerism will serve to indicate for us the possibility of the displacement of consciousness. It is abundantly verified in the experiments, among others, of Charcot at Paris, that a primary effect of mesmerism is to produce anæsthesia. The numerous surgical operations of Elliottson upon patients thus anæsthetized show the same thing. But, so far from being helpless, the body is more than ever under the control of the will. In an instance reported by two of Charcot's colleagues, the hypnotized subject was made by a simple act of will to produce all the obvious and successive phenomena of a burn upon her chest, without the application of heat, and after recovery. Organic bodily changes are not only caused thus, but, if existent, may undergo cure. Complex muscular responses are rendered to magnets held about the head and over the body, and small changes of heat, normally unrecognizable, distinguished. If the subject promise, or be desired to effect it, certain avenues of sense can be kept closed. He may wake blind, or blind as concerns any one person or thing. In touch with the operator, the subject can be silently or by word led into *his* state of mind, and the most varying emotions roused and dominated, each producing its appropriate actions. Promises concerning future performance made under this condition remain after waking as residua outside the condition of waking consciousness, coming duly thereafter at the promised time to fruitage as acts. According to promise, he may wake with one limb or half his body paralyzed or anæsthetized.† Therefore, by some mesmeric process, consciousness is displaced to a mental area, not that of waking life, wherein bodily functions not ordinarily under the control of the will pass into its control, and wherein there is a new and increased susceptibility to the finer forces of magnetism and electricity. A deeper state is within the personal knowledge of many; further back from the frontiers of mind, and responding to yet subtler forces. Herein arise the powers of clairvoyance and psychometry. The limitations of distance are more and more completely transcended, and for the moment scenes remote in space and time are lived in.

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* V. a clear review of Du Prel's book in the March "Theosophist," the "Philosophie der Mystik," also T.P.S. pamphlet No. 3.

† Further details concerning these and like experiments may be found in the "International Scientific" volume (Binet) already referred to; and among innumerable others in the studies of Heidenhain, Reichenbach, and in Professor Gregory's book.

None of these powers are necessarily limited to the trance condition. Reichenbach found that a certain amount of sensitivity to some of the occult qualities of things can be developed in a few hours by anyone who will remain in darkness and without food. yramidal columns of light can be seen about the poles of magnets, and chemical bodies recognised by the quality of the sensations they impart. Gurney and Myers have placed on record evidence enough that, in the ordinary waking state, minds are deeply linked, without regard to space, and scenes and states of one may be transferred to another, so that all the surroundings of a man, and the emotions arising out of them, may be equally vividly the property of his distant friend. And this most often at the approach of some violent death, when, with the passion of the scene, the whole mind is strung to an unwonted intensity, and the picture powerfully projected upon some sensitive imagination.

So also with the barriers of time. We are all sometimes psychometrists; not always seeing, but often feeling the phantom photographs about us; re-thinking old thoughts; reclothing, like Denton's wife, the old fossils with the life and colour they once moved in: the haunted houses of psychical research are but one of a thousand ways in which the past has written its pictured records, and the vagaries of dreams are not all our own. The current catalogue of human faculties is incomplete. The generation waits before a mass of new facts, wishing to see reason to believe them, yet held back by the "second toe in boots" theorists. But the facts are getting too uproarious to be ignored, though to recognise them is to invite a revolution. Spiritualism, mesmerism, clairvoyance and psychometry herald either a whirlwind of changing thought and deepening knowledge, or a stupendous and growing epidemic of credulous idiocy.

It is held, then, by the Occultist that the reasoners of science are occupied with the part instead of the whole; with secondaries instead of primaries. May it not be that the transactions of the séance-room, wherein the pictures of some vivid mind are forced by will to take objective form and colour, palpable to all may be the epitome of a greater process, and all the universe be the clothed ideas of a mind behind the veil? And it is no valid objection to this, even were it true, to urge that the pictures of the séance-room are an illusion common to all the spectators. Perhaps, also, the world is an illusion common to mankind. There must be a reality behind the illusion, in the greater, as in the lesser process, and sensitives to the greater, as to the lesser persistent ideas, only we call the former adepts, seers, and prophets. And inasmuch as the strong will and imagination can, in the séance-room, create the pictures of which the sensitives or medium or all the circle are conscious, it is held that this also is a type or epitome of and ultimately to be evolved into the larger cosmic volition and ideation which is creation. To this, at present rudimentary, receptive and creative mental region, the region whence take origin the conceptions of time and space,

the region wherein arises cognition of the ultimates of things, words have no relation. It is only when its rays have filtered down through the thick strata below that they take narrow forms, and fill verbal frameworks. Words are the lowest vehicle, the stage-coaches, in the communication of thought, serving only till the psychic wires are strung between the inner minds of all men. It is here that the free-will controversy finds for us its solution. Man finds himself full from moment to moment of the certainty that he acts freely; submitting himself to rational distillation, he finds that he can only act according to the voting-majority of motives. The indestructible conception must for the higher mind be the truth, for no motive can be ascribed to the primary ideative processes. Once the higher lawless region be admitted, the limits of the lower mind must not be reflected upon it. The one is the creator; the other deals only with things created. Reasoning is but the faculty of one of many planes of consciousness, and will not serve for the expression of the others. The musician lives nearer the heart of creation than the logician and knows more of its meaning, yet save in music he cannot convey it. The ultimate state of man may be nearer that into which he is now thrown by the richer blends of sound and colour than that produced by the wooden grace of rigid syllogisms. In any case the prevailing psychology can only be sure of one thing, and that is that its theories are necessarily false, for they embrace too few facts. It speaks nothing to the point concerning the great ranges of emotion arising out of sound, scent, and colour; it knows nothing of the location of consciousness when the physical body is unconscious; it knows nothing of the bewildering thought-probing of the séance-room, nor of any other of the thousand curious happenings and displays of spiritualism; and it has not yet taken account of the powers of psychometry nor of the modes whereby minds are linked through space. A true psychology must deal with these and more. It must rise above the lowest manifestations of mind as affected by the outermost garb of Nature, and bring more to the front its own dictum that there is a region in mind that cannot free itself from the deepest reality behind everything. Psychology must grow by the study rather of disease than of health. In some insanities there is an entire change in the set characteristics of the personality; or consciousness may be so split that the subject views himself as two; Hartley Coleridge as a child frequently spoke of himself as four distinct entities; some homicides view their own crimes, whilst performing them, with the horror of an outsider—the normal volition and consciousness of the man is not in the acting part of him, but stands a dismayed critic of the criminal; the psychic phenomena of hysteria are obscurely linked with the periodicity of the lunar cycle. All these things a comprehensive psychology should, yet does not explain. The law of association of ideas appears to be absolutely transcended by the action of certain drugs. In some constitutions Indian hemp arouses vast, vague or vivid incoherent vistas and sheets of colour, rising and dissolving with great sounds; or there come

great pictures of men and nature beyond number and time and space. De Quincey speaks of his opium visions as being cast in a scale of time and space of inconceivable magnitude. Behind these produced ideas of time and space is the producing mind, working in a mode that is not reasoning. Thus, if mind is the producer of the forms of things and of one substance with what is behind form, psychology includes all knowledge. Gathering up the threads, it is increasingly suggested the more they are contemplated that evolution in its totality comprises the expansion of will; the perfecting of sensitivity to ideas; the breaking down of the barriers of individual consciousness; and the slow change of relation between the inner and outer minds, till the latter merges in the former; the expansion of the ideative will, till the pictures that are created no longer flit across the imagination and vanish, but are held and fashioned and clothed with or impressed on matter; the attainment of perfect sensitivity to, or union with, the great ideas of which objective things are copies till the perceiver and the perceived are known for one. So as time moves on, the lives of men must lighten, and the heavy sense of limit dissolve into wider knowledge and pass into the limbo of other illusions. All aspects of evolution converge to one point. The finest force in Nature is thought; to respond more and more perfectly to the thought of others is to share their consciousness, and thus, losing the overbearing sense of self, to become unselfish.

We have tried to show that there is already in us, if we could but know it and live in it, a germ of mind subtly linked with its like in all men and in the moving springs of Nature, and that the whole course of evolution is to raise the whole thinking man to this level, into the blinding light of intuition.

HERBERT CORYN.

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# PRACTICAL THEOSOPHY.

We hear a good deal at present about "Practical Theosophy." Is such a thing possible? If so, in what does it exist? To many Theosophists, Theosophy is an individual internal thing, a system of cosmogony, philosophy, ontology, to which the term *practical* is completely inapplicable. As well, they think, talk of practical metaphysics! Others, again, feel that to love your neighbour and still neglect to help him in the material things in which your aid would evidently be to his advantage, is a barren mockery. One meets people continu-

ally who hardly stir a finger to help others, and yet who talk glibly about the "Rounds" and the "Rings," and the "seven principles" of man; who long for Nirvana, even for Paranirvana; who ardently desire to be joined to the infinite, absorbed into the eternal; who feel that all men are their brothers, all women their sisters, and that thought makes them oh! so happy, gives them such peace of mind! The convict is their brother—their caught and locked-up brother—the tramp is their brother—their idle, unwashed, whisky-soaked, good-for-nothing brother; the workwoman is their sister—their poor, friendless sister, who has to sew sixteen hours a day to keep body and soul together; even the prostitute is their sister—their fallen, wicked sister, who is hurrying to an early grave; the famine-stricken Irish, Chinese, Hindus, are their brothers and sisters—their skin-and-bone brothers and sisters, who are dying of staarvtion. Theosophy teaches them these beautiful truths, they say, and it does them so much good to know it all! Speak to these sentimentalists about "Practical Theosophy," and they look suddenly stupid. Tell them that in a garret not a hundred yards from their back door there lies a fever-stricken family—that you know of fifty cases of genuine distress that they could aid by their money and sympathy, and they look at you as if you were something they had eaten which had not agreed with them. Perhaps they tell you that Theosophy is a spiritual affair, something of a private and confidential nature between their "higher selves" and the Great All, into which no vulgar, earthly considerations enter. These people are probably quite unaware what a wretched sham their "Theosophy" is, and what miserable frauds they are themselves when they pose as Theosophists. They don't know they are selfish. It has never entered their heads to think what would be their thoughts, their words and their actions if they really felt what they say they feel, if they realized in their hearts the meaning of the words "my brother," "my sister."

These people do not trouble themselves to think what their sentiments would be did they learn that a real brother or sister was in want of their aid. Suppose they heard some fine morning that their brother was starving to death, without the means of procuring food, what would be their sensations? Would not their hearts stop beating in horror? Would not every nerve tingle with excitement and with anxiety to save him? What pictures their imagination would draw! Their beloved brother lying helpless on the floor of some wretched hut, while the wife he loved and the children of his heart, emaciated to skeletons like himself, lay dead or dying around him. Would not any woman under these circumstances fly to her banker and make him instantly telegraph money to his agents in the nearest town, with instructions to send messengers at any cost to her brother with immediate relief? Were she a poor woman, would she not hurry with her trinkets, her clothes, her furniture, anything, to the poor man's banker, the pawnbroker, thankful and proud to be able thus to raise the money to save her brother and his family from horrible death? And

then what feverish anxiety, what sleepless nights, until she learned that the relief she had sent had reached her brother in time! Or, suppose a man were told that his pure and innocent sister had been morally tripped up and socially knocked down by some selfish brute whom she had trusted—had been psychically drugged by him, "ruined," deserted, cast out, reviled and spat upon by people morally and intellectually unworthy to be her scullions; handed over in cold blood by the "moral" and the "pious" to the tender mercies of the most selfish and most brutal of both sexes, to be trampled hopelessly into the mud, the helpless slave of the demons of drink and lust. Would not every spark of manliness in him be fanned into a blaze of indignation and rage? Would he not employ every conceivable means to discover the poor girl's hiding-place? And when he had found his sister, would he not throw his protecting arm around her and fight his way with her out of the hyena's den, past the toads of scandal and the vipers of malice, and give her an asylum in his heart and hearth, where the poor wounded, terrified, half-demented girl could recover her mental, moral and physical health; while those who had never tripped, or who had never been seen to fall, howled, and snarled, and hissed, and grimaced before his door in impotent rage that a victim had been rescued from the hell to which they had consigned her as a sacrifice to their demon-god—the great infernal trinity of hypocrisy, cruelty and selfishness?

No! those who descant upon the brotherhood of man seldom realize, even in the faintest degree, the meaning of the pretty sentimental words they utter. If they did, there would be no question as to the nature of Practical Theosophy. If they did, a great unrest would seize them, a supreme desire to help the thousands of suffering brothers and sisters that cross their path every day of their lives, and from whom they shrink because cowardice, selfishness, and indolence inhabit furnished lodgings in their hearts.

The Australian savage murders any black-fellows he meets who do not belong to his little tribe. He kills them on general principles—because they belong to "another set." The civilized world has advanced so far upon the road to Practical Theosophy, that we do not actually murder or maim those who do not belong to our tribe, we merely let them suffer and die, and the advanced ones, the pioneers of the race, write on their tomb-stones, "Here lie my dear brothers and sisters."

The fact is, however, and a staggering one it is too, that Practical Theosophy, in its full acceptation, would mean a dissolution of society as at present constituted. Of that fact there cannot be the slightest doubt, for it would mean a reign of kindness, of sympathy, of unselfishness, of tenderness to the weak, of forgiveness for the erring, of mutual helpfulness, of happiness in seeing others happy, and there is not a single one of our present social institutions that is not founded upon principles diametrically the opposite of these, and which would not swell up and burst to pieces were the ferment of

altruism introduced into it. Only fancy what the result would be of introducing Practical Theosophy into our treatment of criminals, and into our legal processes? What would become of that dignified and learned profession, the law, were the object of the solicitor and the barrister to make people friendly and forgiving, instead of being to fan their enmity, spite and hatred? What would we do with our great prisons and convict establishments, were jurymen, judges and legislators to really look upon criminals as their ignorant, misguided, erring, stupid, neglected brothers and sisters? Or, again, what would become of our arsenals and iron-clads, of our generals and admirals, our colonels and captains, and our be-feathered and be-belted warriors generally, were the people of various nationalities to refuse to shoot and stab and blow each other to pieces at the word of command, for no better reason than that they were brothers and had no quarrel, and did not want to harm each other, or each other's wives or children? Another noble profession would go to the dogs! What would become of the churches were the clergy to treat their fellow-creatures as brothers and sisters? Would not the bishops hasten to convert their palaces into asylums for the homeless wretches who now lie shivering at night in the road before their gates? Would not the lesser clergy quickly follow their example? Then they would have to feed these unfortunates, for the bishop's brothers and sisters are starving all the time as well as shivering; and how could they do that and at the same time maintain an establishment? What would the Lord think of His ministers if they neglected to keep up their place in society? The next thing would probably be that the clergy would open their great empty churches for wretched and homeless women and children to take shelter in, instead of letting them lie shivering in the rain and wind before the barred doors of those gloomy temples of their jealous God—and then what on earth would become of religion?

But let us be reassured! The social order is in no danger just yet of being upset by the introduction of Practical Theosophy into the lives of men. Practical Theosophy to exist, except in fancy, requires Practical Theosophists—in other words, people who value the happiness of others more than their own enjoyments, and such people are a rare exception in any place in life—in the law the army, the church, the legislature, in agriculture, trade, commerce or manufacture. If anyone feels to-day that his sentiments are those of Practical Theosophy, and seriously proposes to sacrifice his worldly prospects and enjoyments in order to spend his life in doing what little he can to benefit others, he runs a risk, that is not far from a certainty, of being treated by the world as an incorrigible lunatic. It is a fact which few will deny that anyone would be considered a madman who openly and confessedly followed the injunction of the great Practical Theosophist of Judea, to sell all that he had, and having given the proceeds to the poor, to follow him—that is to say, who devoted his life, in complete forgetfulness of self, to the great and glorious task of raising humanity

out of the quag mire of ignorance, selfishness and cruelty, in which it flounders. If he had some reasonable object in view, well and good. The world can understand a person being altruistic for the sake of a good living and an assured position in society—there is some sense in that; it can even excuse a man for loving his neighbours, if he firmly believes that he will thereby be entitled to a reserved seat in the hall of the gods; but "utter forgetfulness of self," that is quite unnatural, and amounts to a sign of weakness of intellect!

When people talk of Practical Theosophy as a thing that is possible in the world to-day, in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred they are thinking of practical benevolence and charity; for if the very foundation of Theosophy be the sentiment of the brotherhood of man, Practical Theosophy, by the very laws of society, as at present constituted, is an impossibility. Law, religion, politics, our very system of morality itself, are all incompatible with the existence of the sentiment of the brotherhood of man. All these institutions were invented by and for people imbued with the opposite sentiments; they are fitted only for such people, and could not exist for ten minutes in a world inhabited by Practical Theosophists.

The natural laws that govern the manifestations of Practical Theosophy are as different to those that obtain in our present system of egoism and destructive competition, as the laws that govern the phenomena of steam are to the laws of hydraulics. We know full well that no steam will be generated in a boiler until the whole of the water therein has been raised to boiling-point. Even so we also know that in order to raise the world to the point at which men will "generate," Practical Theosophy, the spiritual temperature of the whole of mankind, must be raised; all men and women must be made kinder and still kinder in heart, and stronger and still stronger in spirit; and this can only be done by acting on them *en masse*, and raising the standard of kindness and of spiritual strength in the whole race.

Will works of benevolence and charity do this? Are they not in themselves a consequence rather than a cause, a fruit rather than a seed? Such works are indeed a fruit, the immature fruit which the tree of kindness bears in the half-grown stunted condition it necessarily presents when planted in the uncongenial soil of selfishness. Benevolence and charity belong to the time when men stone and crucify those who tell them that all men are brothers and ought to treat each other as such. They are the tithe grudgingly paid by vice to virtue, by egoism to altruism, and their existence shows that egoism and vice take nine-tenths, or rather ninety-nine hundredths, of the produce of human life. Were Practical Theosophy the rule of life, benevolence and charity would not be needed, for they owe their existence to the greater prevalence of malevolence and injustice. They are the exceptions occurring when the rule is in force, and disappear when the rule ceases to act. Benevolence has become an anachronism since the idea of universal brotherhood dawned upon the world. Charity,

under the higher law, is no better than a flattering deceiver, for it tells people that they are worthy of praise and reward for doing the things which Theosophy declares it to be criminal to leave undone, because not to do them, and a thousand times more, is to do injustice. Active works of benevolence and charity are therefore not Practical Theosophy. They belong to the old regime of egoism, of which they are the flowers and the fruit; and, however good in themselves, they should not be mistaken for Practical Theosophy if a dangerous delusion is to be avoided.

If, then, Practical Theosophy be in reality a form of human life—of morality and of society—far higher than those which exist in the world of to-day, and for the coming of which we can but prepare the way, can we, nevertheless, not give a practical turn to such Theosophy as we already have, so that it will hurry on the reign of Brotherhood? Or must our Theosophy remain for long centuries only a self-centred and self-ideal thing? What form can we Theosophists give to our efforts as to make our Theosophy an influence in the world for good? If Theosophy is to be the guiding power of our lives, in what manner, and to what end, is it to guide us?

We cannot, at the present day, exercise Practical Theosophy and still remain in such harmony with our surroundings as would entitle us in the world's eyes to be called sane. We cannot even realize in our imagination, soaked through as we are with egotistic modes of thought and standards of value, what it will be like to live in a world peopled by Practical Theosophists. But, without the slightest doubt, we can turn what Thesophy we have in us to practical account; for we can each of us add his or her warmth to the general heat, and thus help to raise the moral and spiritual temperature of the world a little nearer to the point at which the free generation of Practical Theosophy will naturally take place among men. We must remember, however, that for the exercise of Practical Theosophy, as it will one day exist in the world, reciprocity is necessary. If the person you treat as a brother treats you in return as an enemy, the real effect of the principle of Brotherhood cannot manifest itself; and at present, as society is constituted, it is not possible, and not in human nature, for any man to carry out that principle in all his intercourse with his neighbours. Practical Theosophy in isolated individuals, if it is to avoid an opposition that would paralyse or destroy it, must of necessity take on a somewhat different form to that it would assume in a society where all were Practical Theosophists.

The Practical Theosophist of to-day is the individual who is animated by that spirit of brotherhood which will one day become universal; and, as such, he is none other than the man who at all times tries to impart to others the Theosophical knowledge he has got himself, and to imbue them with the Theosophical principles by which he guides his own conduct; who tries to stir up in others the spirit of kindness, of patience, of gentleness, of courage and

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of truth; who tries to induce his neighbours fearlessly to think out the problem of existence for themselves, and to feel the dignity and the responsibility of their own manhood and womanhood; who tries to make others self-respecting and strong. Those who become penetrated by these sentiments and qualities do not need any stimulus to make them engage in works of so-called charity, for these will be for them the natural outlet, in the present order of things, for their overflowing impulse to benefit others. The feelings that prompt to all kind actions belong to the domain of Practical Theosophy, but the actual works of benevolence and charity to which they prompt are not Theosophy; they are accidents in the growth of Theosophy, just as the useful inventions of modern times are accidents in the progress of Science. The object of Science is not to discover new bleaching powders, or murderous explosives; its object is the intellectual conquest of material nature. Even so the object of Theosophy is the moral conquest of man's animal nature, irrespective of the soup kitchens and orphan asylums that spring up during the process. It seeks to subdue or chase out the toad, the vulture, the wolf, the pig, the viper, the sloth, the shark, and all the rest of the menagerie of lower animal natures that now howl and croak and hiss and grunt and caw in the hearts of men, and it knows that this is an operation which can only be performed by each man for himself. Each must purify his own mind and make his own spirit strong, and the difference between Theoretical and Practical Theosophists is that the former talk about these things and the latter do them. But though this process is a self-regarding one, the effect is not. He who is a Practical Theosophist, who tries to make himself strong and pure-hearted, is, even unconsciously, a powerful influence in the world, and he becomes a centre of energy potent in proportion as he forgets himself, and merges his hopes and fears, his likes and dislikes, his thoughts, words, and deeds, in the great life of humanity—dissolving his personality, so to say, in the race to which he belongs; feeling with it, thinking for it, bearing its burdens in his consciousness, and its sins upon his conscience; and knowing that to sacrifice himself for the good of humanity is therefore in reality but to ensure his own salvation.

The Practical Theosophist, in proportion to his own strength, gives strength to all with whom he comes in contact, through a process somewhat similar to that of electrical induction. Colonel Ingersoll was once asked if he thought he could improve upon the work of "the Creator." He replied that had he been consulted he would have made good health catching, instead of disease. Had the great American orator and wit looked a little deeper into his own heart, he would have seen that "the Creator" is not so stupid as he thinks Him, for health is in reality catching, especially health of mind and heart; and Ingersoll himself owes most of his great influence in the world of thought, not to his logic, powerful as that is, not to his wonderful command of illustrations and similes, not to his rapid flow of brilliant language, but to the healthy

contagion of a heart overflowing with the magnetism of kindness, generosity and pity, and charged with the electricity of a love for the good, the true and the beautiful. The Practical Theosophist, wherever he goes and whatever he does, causes those with whom he has to do to "catch" Theosophy. A hint dropped here, a word said there, a question asked, an opinion expressed, become through the power of his vitalizing magnetism the seeds of Theosophy in others.

Practical Theosophy then is the sum of those institutions into which human life will spontaneously crystalize when men and women become Practical Theosophists; in other words, when they feel in their hearts that all men are brothers, and act accordingly. Practical Theosophists to-day, those sporadic and premature instances of an altruism that will one day become universal, are the drops that precede and presage the rain. They cannot, under the rule of the present morality, and with existing social religious and political institutions, live and act as they would were all men as they themselves are. The most they can hope to do is to try their best to prepare the world for the reception of human brotherhood as the foundation of all our ideas of life and morality; and this they can best accomplish by each one making himself pure and strong, for then they become centres of a spiritual health which is "catching"; they become "laya points," so to say, through which there flows into the world from another plane of existence the spirit of brotherhood, of mercy, of pity and of love.

Practical Theosophy is the great edifice which will be constructed here below by the invisible, intelligent Powers of Nature as soon as there exists on earth the material necessary to build it. Practical Theosophists are the bricks with which the edifice will one day be constructed; and the builders only wait until the lumps of mud that now cover the earth have been converted by the fire of misery and sorrow, of painful effort and sustained aspiration, into hard and shining bricks, fit to build a temple to the living God.

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# THE "DOROTHY" RESTAURANT CO., LTD.,

## 448, OXFORD STREET, W.

At the invitation of the Directors of the above Company, the T.P S. was represented at the luncheon given in honour of the opening of the new premises hereafter to be known as the "Dorothy" Restaurant, and instituted for the use of ladies only. This is an extension of the movement begun at 81, Mortimer Street, and which was set on foot to meet the requirements of women engaged in business, students, governesses, etc. Good food and careful attendance, combined with the most moderate charges, are qualities which will commend themselves to all our lady friends and sister Theosophists, and we can bear witness to the efficiency and convenience of every arrangement which has been made by the Directors.

Needless to say that Theosophy was strongly represented at the opening luncheon, and we are enabled to record the presence of the head and founder of the Society, Madam Blavatsky, the Countess Wachtmeinster, Baroness de Palland, and many other active partisans of the movement. Theosophists are often accused of doing no useful work; this is by no means correct, as our "activities" plainly show, and in this case we are glad to note that the leading spirits of the Company are genuine and practical Theosophists

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# THE VALLEY OF THE QUEST.

"Occultism is not the pursuit of happiness, as men understand the word; for the first step is sacrifice, the second, renunciation."

Occultism is the "narrow way" that leads out of all human experience.

THE continuity and evolution of the religious sentiment in mankind as differing from the ephemeral theologies of each form of religion, is an idea which is apparently attracting the attention of thinking men,* but vague speculations as to what constitutes that "something" which is admitted to be the underlying basis of all creeds, and the still vaguer hopes that the wider faith to come may be a more potent impetus to high thinking and right living than those of the past have been, can only be matters of interest to the cultured minority who have drifted from the old anchor ground of dogmatic theology, and have not yet found the wider harbour of rest where the longings of heart and intellect would again find fruition in a system of thought which would satisfy both alike.

That such a system of thought now exists in the world, and has existed through the countless ages of past time, is a fact which must surely strike those capable of receiving it with the deep enthusiasm of worship, and the capability of wisdom which the reception of it implies must always be regarded by them as their greatest glory, for "what greatness is greater than wisdom?" And in proportion as each one realizes the inestimable value of this "pearl of great price" will be his endeavours to make others a sharer of it with him.

The field which this system of thought—this wisdom-religion covers, is of so stupendous an extent, and can be approached from so many points of view that it is bewildering to know where to start in any attempt at definition, for the roads to men's hearts and minds differ *ad infinitum*, and the fervency and many-sidedness of a St. Paul are wanted to carry home the truth by "being all things to all men."

The conviction, too, that truth and knowledge are relative terms, and

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* See the Future Development of Religious Life, by Layon Ramsey, in the "Westminster Review" of May, 1889.

that the absolute cannot be comprehended, still less expressed, by ordinary men—convictions which the wider-minded even in the religious world are now beginning to grasp—must always tend to veil dogmatic utterance in more or less mystic terms, but though the philosophically-minded may realize vividly this relativity of knowledge, it should make him none the less anxious to enable others to see the truth as he sees it; for this relativity of truth and knowledge in our present state is no implication that one view of it is as true as another, or indeed that the absolute truth may not ultimately be attained by man. But there are many steps in the ladder. The dim mind of an African savage is incapable of appreciating the thoughts of an educated European, just as the same average European can by no possibility grasp the sublime ideas of an Eastern sage. Every height of knowledge and spirituality has been won at the sword's point in past incarnations, but the first duty of those who have attained fresh light is to attempt to give some of their knowledge to those who are not yet fit to stand where they stand.

This may at first appear to be at variance with the facts so repeatedly advanced in the works (particularly "Esoteric Buddhism") which purported to translate for the first time into ordinary language the Divine mysteries which had been hidden in past ages from all save those who had had the wisdom and the courage to force their way into the sacred precincts, and, ultimately, to attain initiation. But a little consideration of the subject will show that this is not so, or rather, that every age of the world has duties of its own, and that the duties of to-day are no more at variance with the duties of past ages than the duties of manhood are at variance with the duties of childhood.

Educated as one has been in the liberal atmosphere of Western culture, where free discussion of any new formula is not only permissible but obligatory, and where the veil of secrecy has the savour of imposture, it is hard at first to understand the reasons for the secrecy that has obtained in past ages, and the severe penalties attached by Occult Lodges to any infringement of that secrecy. A little consideration of the subject must demonstrate two satisfactory reasons. The first is that the Divine Wisdom itself—the light destined to illuminate cycle after cycle in the progressive evolution of this planet and this race of men—must not run the faintest risk of being extinguished; that the minute number of men who have proved themselves capable of outstripping the race, and of prematurely evolving the Godlike attributes fitting them to become custodians of this Divine Wisdom, must be so guarded, that the torch of Truth may never fail to be passed on from generation to generation.

Religionists may contend that their special form of faith provides all the light that humanity needs, but apart from the fact that many forms

co-exist in the world at the same time—which of itself is proof that no one form is suited for all mankind—it must be apparent that every religion is continually undergoing change, and as a fact, however pure it may have been at the outset, it is inevitably destined to perish through inherent corruption. How necessary, therefore, is it that the Divine Wisdom (Theosophia) should remain an ever ready source for the periodical regeneration of Humanity!

Now we who live in this age of free discussion can form but dim conceptions of what bigotry and intolerance really mean. The culmination of this little cycle of civilization is going on so fast that the comparatively mild prejudices and intolerances of, say the beginning of the present century, are rapidly being lost to view—(Shelley might have been a happy man had he lived to-day)—while the records of the dark ages left by historians are so steeped in cruelty that even the few who read them find difficulty in giving credence to a record that pictures men in the character of devils. But this cruelty and intolerance are just what had to be guarded against by the secret Lodges, whose duty was to educate disciples in spiritual knowledge and in the mysteries of the hidden forces of Nature.

The second reason is that until the cumulative culture of past eras began to produce a generation capable of grasping the deeper truths, the wider diffusions of the true philosophy among the herd of men could only have been productive of harm to them; indeed, the cynical indifference or flippant sarcasm with which works dealing with this wider philosophy of life have, as a rule, so far been treated in this country in the public press, and the failure to accord so much as an attentive hearing, raises the doubt—a doubt which, we understand, was even felt by some of the more advanced in the hierarchy of wisdom—whether the present promulgation to the world of the Secret Doctrine of the ages has not been premature, and has truly resulted in little more than "a casting of pearls before swine!"

The veil, it is true, is only being partially lifted even now. The real "mysteries" are guarded as jealously to-day as they ever were in past ages, and until each man has proved by facing and conquering the personal human nature in him, that he is incapable of using with any personal end the powers with which he may be entrusted, he will never be willingly endowed by the guardians of the secrets with the knowledge that brings such power in its train.

This is the fundamental reason for the care with which the "mysteries" are guarded. It will probably not appear conclusive to the frivolous pleasure-loving generation of to-day, who can only appreciate the dissipation of energy they practise, and are incapable of

understanding what concentration means. Nevertheless, it is a fact that intellectual culture, if backed by unwavering Will, *may* step over the line, and *may*, without having undergone the necessary moral discipline, acquire powers which are the appanage of the gods. This achievement was known in past ages by the name of magic—the seizure of Divine powers by hands which were by no means divine! The awful calamity to mankind of the possession of such powers by men ready to use them for their own personal ends may at least be dimly imagined. The student of occult literature will find in the strife which culminated in the submergence of Atlantis a case in point.

In marked contrast to the aspirants after magical powers stands the small minority whose sole aim is spiritual knowledge apart from the attainment of any powers whatever. "Union" is their watchword—partial union or knowledge of their own higher self, and, far off in the heights beyond, complete union of that higher self with the Supreme—but the very first step in the training teaches that though the powers themselves may not be desired they cannot be avoided. The mystery of man's higher nature, of what is commonly called the soul, is so intimately connected with the mystery of Nature's hidden forces that the *real knowledge* of the former necessarily entails control over the latter. This is what the blind religionist has no conception of! The mediæval saint, indeed, by the intensity of his concentration unconsciously acquired some of the powers referred to, which the populace of the day rightly enough ascribed to holiness of life. But the life of the devout modern religionist, sunk in the same ignorance, but without the mediæval saint's concentration, sums itself up in mere vague aspiration! A little knowledge of the spiritual science is apparently, therefore, the very first necessity to give point to devotion.

But to return to ordinary humanity, it must be apparent that any premature unsettling of the faith of the multitude could only be productive of harm. For the Secret Doctrine deals with a vastly wider range than the subjective sphere of reward or punishment following each earth-life, and how could men barely capable of grasping or of acting up to the simplest rules of morality or religion be fit recipients of its exalted philosophy—its counsels of Perfection?! It is like expecting the ordinary humanity to be actuated by the same motives as those which guide the Redeemers of the Race! True, every man has within him the germ and potentiality of Deity (and not man only, the animals also and the lower realms of being too, for everything has life, and all creation is linked together and is animated in varying degree by innate Deity), but how few are the men who will ever attain these heights! The great majority of humanity will never desire complete emancipation,

but will rest satisfied with earthly life, to which they will unceasingly return, sorrowing and rejoicing alternately in its sorrows and its joys. *

And we who have undertaken the Great Quest, shall we ever attain? For it is written: "Great ones fall back even from the threshold, unable to sustain the weight of their responsibity, unable to pass on." It is something, at all events, to have had the eyes opened, to know that—

"We suffer from ourselves, none else compels,
None other holds us that we live and die
And whirl upon the wheel, and hug and kiss
Its spokes of Agony,
Its tire of tears, its nave of nothingness."

Can it be possible that the ardent dedication of the life, and the fervency with which the occult doctrine was first seized and worshipped, constituted in reality an initiation which made it an impossibility that the neophyte could ever return to the ordinary worldly life he lived before? And is it possible that the constantly recurring anguish which, apparently without the slightest cause, spontaneously invades the soul, is in reality the inevitable result of this initiation, and is directly administered by the hand of a master?

It is only on the hypothesis of some conscious external agent who can strike at will each time some different chord of pain, and can at the same time make the sufferer aware of the object with which the pain is inflicted, that this awful wringing of the soul can be at all accounted for. It matters not very much whether the master be an individual man—our future teacher may be, with whom we may be destined even in this life to come into closer relationship—or whether it be our own Higher Self of whom the lower has as yet no consciousness, but which sits apart in the hidden sanctuary of our being, looking down from its serene height on the strife of the battle, and guiding the life towards its greatness. One of these two it must be. On any other hypothesis life is too hideously empty for words to paint!

It is easy to talk in a glib way of the killing out of all earthly desire, but to be forced for days together to realize the blankness of desolation which these words imply is an awful experience to go through. But through it all deep down is the conviction that greater strength and courage are being gained, the thought gradually rises up that the lesson is being rightly learned, and the ultimate end and object of it all takes form before inner vision as the Great Renunciation—Renunciation not of

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* It was attempted in "Problems of the Hidden Life," pages 117-118, to show from another point of view how this must inevitably be so.

earthly possessions merely, but of life, of character, of very being, of all that constitutes the known "self." *

But this is the very first step on the path, and the initial trial has to be endured many times before its lesson can be rightly learned. If such experience constitutes but the first glimmering of vision on the Astral plane, what awful experiences must remain in store when the eyes are completely opened! Gladly would the disciple return to the old life, could he but find any peace or rest in it, but though the "Great Quest" more than ever takes the shape of a "forlorn hope," it is the only possible path open. The ability to consciously step over into the "fixed place of peace" doubtless depends on the strength of the seeker, but having "put his hand to the plough," there can be no turning back. When the cup of earthly experience—the experience of the senses and the emotions—has been drunk to the dregs, it is Destiny itself—no mere individual choice—that goads to the experience of the greater life beyond.

It is only in consequence of proving from past observation that the attempt to describe in words these indescribable sensations of the soul was a means of obtaining relief that any such attempt† has now been made. To record them seems useless, for what meaning can they convey to any but the handful of those who have had similar experience? But there was also the sub-conscious feeling that the power that administered the suffering intended them to be recorded, and what is wrung from the heart in such wise may have some power.

The first comments on "Light on the Path" published in "Lucifer," in September, 1887, anticipated with greater vividness what the writer had already partially experienced. Their truth and value therefore are increasingly brought home to the mind. The very first aphorism, too, "Before the eyes can see they must be incapable of tears," was such an enigma that it required explanation. If, then, these experiences of the writer may possibly be of any value to others, they will be rendered much more so by extracts from the above comments.

While the exquisite devotional feeling displayed in the Bhagavad Gita is felt to be wanting in the comments as well as in "Light on the Path" itself, which may be described as a scientific treatise on the Attainment of Perfection, and only to be surpassed in this characteristic by the still greater detail of the Yoga Aphorisms of

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* Here is the same idea under another aspect. With the true insight of the great poet, Shelley expresses it from the devotional point of view

"The spirit of the worm beneath the sod,
In love and worship blends itself with God."

† "The Dark light of the Soul," published in "Problems of the Hidden Life," as we as the "Dedication" with which the book begins, were similar attempts years ago.

Patanjali—difference of character in the writers must account for the different phraseology used—certainly no difference in the object or goal aimed at by both. And though in the soul's deep trouble it will fly for refuge to the heavenly speech of Krishna in the Song Celestial, no words can better describe than those of "Light on the Path," or those of the following extracts from one of the comments, how inconceivably exalted is the goal aimed at, or how the morality and devotionalism of the religious as well as the most superb ambitions of earthly life are but as the dust below the feet of the Occultist who has dared to face the realities of existence.

The stoical performance of duty, too, may be, perhaps, to an even greater degree than religious aspiration, a means of leading to the Path, but until the Divine touch fires the soul with faith, and with the recognition of the mighty destiny that awaits it, the most devoted performance of duty will be but a dull treadmill, wanting alike in the adventure of the mountain ascent, and in the breath of the keener air that tells the climber he is mounting upwards.

"No man desires to see that light which illumines the spaceless soul until pain and sorrow and despair have driven him away from the life of ordinary humanity. First he wears out pleasure; then he wears out pain—till, at last, his eyes become incapable of tears.

. . . . . .

"To be incapable of tears is to have faced and conquered the simple human nature, and to have attained an equilibrium which cannot be shaken by personal emotions. It does not imply any hardness of heart or any indifference. It does not imply the exhaustion of sorrow, when the suffering soul seems powerless to suffer acutely any longer; it does not mean the deadness of old age, when emotion is becoming dull because the strings which vibrate to it are wearing out. None of these conditions are fit for a disciple, and if any of them exist in him, it must be overcome before the path can be entered upon. Hardness of heart belongs to the selfish man, the egotist, to whom the gate is for ever closed. Indifference belongs to the fool and the false philosopher, those whose lukewarmness makes them mere puppets, not strong enough to face the realities of existence. When pain or sorrow has worn out the keenness of suffering, the result is a lethargy not unlike that which accompanies old age, as it is usually experienced by men and women. Such a condition makes the entrance to the path impossible, because the first step is one of difficulty and needs a strong man, full of psychic and physical vigour, to attempt it.

"It is a truth that, as Edgar Allan Poe said, the eyes are the windows for the soul, the windows of that haunted palace in which it dwells. This is the very nearest interpretation into ordinary language of the

meaning of the text. If grief, dismay, disappointment or pleasure can shake the soul so that it loses its fixed hold on the calm spirit which inspires it, and the moisture of life breaks forth, drowning knowledge in sensation, then all is blurred, the windows are darkened, the light is useless. This is as literal a fact as that if a man, at the edge of a precipice, loses his nerve through some sudden emotion, he will certainly fall. The poise of the body, the balance, must be preserved, not only in dangerous places, but even on the level ground, and with all the assistance Nature gives us by the law of gravitation. So it is with the soul, it is the link between the outer body and the starry spirit beyond; the Divine spark dwells in the still place where no convulsion of Nature can shake the air; this is so always. But the soul may lose its hold on that, its knowledge of it, even though these two are part of one whole; and it is by emotion, by sensation that this hold is loosed. To suffer either pleasure or pain causes a vivid vibration, which is, to the consciousness of man, life. Now this sensibility does not lessen when the disciple enters upon his training—it increases. It is the first test of his strength. He must suffer, must enjoy or endure, more keenly than other men, while yet he has taken on him a duty which does not exist for other men—that of not allowing his suffering to shake him from his fixed purpose.

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"In one of the great mystic Brotherhoods, there are four ceremonies that take place early in the year, which practically illustrate and elucidate these aphorisms. They are ceremonies in which only novices take part, for they are simply services of the threshold. But it will show how serious a thing it is to become a disciple when it is understood that these are all ceremonies of sacrifice. The first one is this of which I have been speaking. The keenest enjoyment, the bitterest pain, the anguish of loss and despair are brought to bear on the trembling soul, which has not yet found light in the darkness, which is helpless as a blind man is, and until these shocks can be endured without loss of equilibrium, the astral senses must remain sealed. This is the merciful law.

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"In sensation no permanent home can be found because change is the law of this vibratory existence. That fact is the first one which must be learned by the disciple. It is useless to pause and weep for a scene in a kaleidoscope which has passed.

"It is a very well-known fact, one with which Bulwer Lytton dealt with great power, that an intolerable sadness is the very first experience of the neophyte in Occultism. A sense of blankness falls upon him which makes the world a waste, and life a vain exertion. This follows

his first serious contemplation of the abstract. In gazing, or even in attempting to gaze, on the ineffable mystery of his own higher nature, he himself causes the initial trial to fall on him. The oscillation between pleasure and pain ceases for, perhaps, an instant of time; but that is enough to have cut him loose from his fast moorings in this world of sensation. He has experienced, however briefly, the greater life; and he goes on with ordinary existence weighted by a sense of unreality, of blank, of horrid negation. This was the nightmare which visited Bulwer Lytton's neophyte in "Zanoni"; and even Zanoni himself, who had learned great truths, and been entrusted with great powers, had not actually passed the threshold where fear and hope, despair and joy seem at one moment absolute realities, at the next mere forms of fancy.

"This initial trial is often brought on us by life itself. For life is, after all, the great teacher. There are persons so near the door of knowledge that life itself prepares them for it, and no individual hand has to invoke the hideous guardian of the entrance. These must naturally be keen and powerful organizations, capable of the most vivid pleasure; their pain comes and fills its great duty. The most intense forms of suffering fall on such a nature, till at last it arouses from its stupor of consciousness, and by the force of its internal vitality steps over the threshold into a place of peace. Then the vibration of life loses its power of tyranny. The sensitive nature must suffer still; but the soul has freed itself and stands aloof, guiding the life towards its greatness. Those who are the subjects of Time, and go slowly through all his spaces, live on through a long-drawn series of sensations, and suffer a constant mingling of pleasure and of pain. They do not dare to take the snake of self in a steady grasp and conquer it, so becoming Divine; but prefer to go on fretting through divers experiences, suffering blows from the opposing forces.

"When one of these subjects of Time decides to enter on the path of Occultism, it is this which is his first task. If life has not taught it to him, if he is not strong enough to teach himself, and if he has power enough to demand the help of a master, then this fearful trial, depicted in "Zanoni," is put upon him. The oscillation in which he lives is for an instant stilled; and he has to survive the shock of facing what seems to him at first sight as the abyss of nothingness. Not till he has learned to dwell in this abyss, and has found its peace, is it possible for his eyes to have become incapable of tears."

"The eyes of wisdom are like the ocean depths; there is neither joy nor sorrow in them; therefore the Occultist must become stronger than joy, and greater than sorrow."

While the above is doubtless a more detailed analysis of the process

than the masters of past ages thought it advisable to put before the world, to many minds the more devotional expression of the Ancients must appeal with greater power. Take, for example, the description given below by Farídu-d-dîn-Attâr in his "Colloquy of the Birds" of the seven stages in the road leading to union with the Divine Essence. While the foregoing description seems to be analogous with the pain and toil of the first valley, there is throughout a marked correspondence between the devotional rhapsodies of the Mohammedan writer and the more scientifically formulated rules of "Light on the Path." From the beginning to the end of ends the correspondence is preserved, and each writer but uses his own expression for that which is beyond all expression—the sublime path that leads from manhood to Deity, and which everyone must tread alone.

"First there is the valley of the Quest; painful and toilsome is that valley; and there for years mayst thou dwell, stripping thy soul bare of all earthly attachment, indifferent to forms of faith or unfaith, until the light of the Divine Essence casts a ray upon thy desolation.

"Then, when thy heart has been set on fire, shalt thou enter the second valley—the valley of Love—a valley that has no limits.

"Next is the valley of Knowledge, which has no beginning, neither ending. There each who enters is enlightened, so far as he is able to bear it, and finds in the contemplation of truth the place which belongs to him. The mystery of the essence of being is revealed to him. He sees the almond within its shell, he sees God under all the things of sense: or rather, he sees nothing but him whom he loves. But for one who has attained to these mysteries, how many millions have turned aside out of the way upon the road!

"The fourth valley is the valley of Sufficiency, where God is all in all; where the contemplation of the Divinity is the one reality, and all things else, sensible or intellectual, are absorbed in nothingness.

"The fifth is the valley of the Unity, where the Divine Essence, independent of its attributes, is the object of contemplation.

"Thence the elect soul passes to the sixth valley, the valley of Amazement; a dolorous region where, "dark with excessive bright" from the revelation of the Unity, it gropes its way in pain and confusion. He who has the Unity graven on his heart forgets all else and himself also. Should any man say to such an one:—Art thou annihilated or existent, or both, or neither? Art thou thyself or not thyself? he would reply: I know nothing at all, not even that I know nothing. I love; but I know not whom I love—I am neither Muslim nor infidel. What am I then? What say I? I have no knowledge of my love. My heart is at the same time full and empty.

"Last stage of all is the valley of Annihilation of Self; of com-

plete Renunciation *—the seventh and supreme degree which no human words can describe. There is the great ocean of Divine Love. The world present and the world to come are but as figures reflected in it. And, as it rises and falls, how can they remain? He who plunges in that sea, and is lost in it, finds perfect peace."

One pregnant warning is here required. Let none imagine that sickly sentimentalism or blind religious emotionalism constitute the "setting on fire" of the second valley, before the awful process of stripping the soul bare of all earthly attachment has ever been begun. Religious emotionalism may be a means of leading to the path of wisdom, and may be a faint foretaste of the Love referred to, but the self-satisfied complacency of the most emotionally religious is but a sign that the very existence of the "Great Quest" has not yet been realized.

The enlightenment of the valley of Knowledge—the "seeing of the almond within its shell"—doubtless refers to the conquest of Nature's hidden secrets, and the consequent attainment of powers over her subtle forces, which the adept acquires at certain stages of his progress. The parallel passage in "Light on the Path" is very apparent. "Inquire of the earth, the air, and the water of the secrets they hold for you. The development of your inner senses will enable you to do this."

The comparison between the process in the fourth and fifth valleys is the subject exclusively dealt with in the twelfth chapter of the Bhagavad-Gita, and great stress is there laid on the terrible difficulty of fixing the heart on the Unmanifest—the attributeless Deity—in other words, of realizing the Unity. The Muslim mystic wisely leads the neophyte through the fourth valley before attempting to enter the fifth, and if without the preliminary experience of the preceding one—

> " . . . . . that viewless faith,
> Shall scarce be trod by man bearing the flesh!"

what vast strides of advance must separate the different stages of progress typified in the seven valleys!

The attainment symbolized in the seventh valley will be recognised as that unutterable condition, which no religion can find fitting words to describe, but which all religions, which are not atrophied by materialism, must attempt, in more or less vague terms, to formulate.

The few mystics who have penetrated to the inner meaning of the Christian faith will also find in the above allegory an exact counterpart of the lessons intended to be taught by the Gospels. The baptism, the

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* "Poverty" is the word used in the original It is the Sufi term corresponding with the more intelligible expression, renunciation

fasting, the temptation—what are they but the initiatory stages of the first valleys? The miracles represent the attainment of powers over the hidden forces of Nature, and the beneficent use which all adepts of the Good Law are bound to make of these powers. The agony in the garden seems to find its correspondence in the valley of Amazement—the preparatory initiation for the passing of the final gateway, while the culminating sacrifice of the crucifixion and death symbolizes the ultimate annihilation of "Self"—the death of the last remnant of earthly attraction, destined to be followed on the third day by the resurrection of the perfected Man—the Christ—who finally under the symbol of the "Ascension" attains Nirvana.

Thus only is the "Son of Man" destined to become "perfect through suffering."

It is recognised as a truism that worldly success is ultimately referable to personal merit, and, going deeper, that the noblest achievement of all —that of character—is similarly due to sustained individual efforts; but when dealing with the same life of man, Theology, not content to leave natural causes to eventuate in natural results, must needs import another factor in the shape of an imaginary external Redeemer, without whose aid the noblest works of man are, to use a cant phrase, "but filthy rags." One of the saddest stories of the lapse of mankind into the degrading materialism of the present day is to be found in the misinterpretation put by the early Church on the Gospels, which the writers intended as allegories of the soul's initiations—the attainment of the χριστος or Christ-spirit in man, but which the Church very early in its career degraded into the personal history of a single individual, with the inevitable result that during the early centuries more or less wilful mutilations and interpolations have so changed the face of the Gospels that the original writers would scarcely recognise them. True, there has been, and there will be, a continued succession of teachers and revivers of spirituality in mankind, and these may rightly be called Redeemers of the race. Looked at from the widest point of view, every great reformer of abuses in every department of life—everyone who inspires men with better thoughts and nobler ideals—may be called a redeemer, but the term in its common acceptation is rightly reserved for the limited number of great historical examples—men who are recognised as being something more than ordinary Humanity, and who were, in fact, Avatars—direct incarnations of Deity. These Avatars may be either men who have raised themselves to the God-level, and who have therefore become one with the Logos, or, in the rarer cases, men into whose souls the Logos had descended in absolute plenitude, and with whose souls it has associated itself during the life-time of the individual for some urgent

need of the race.* But the sense in which such may be regarded as Redeemers of the race is very different from the degraded personal sense understood by modern Christianity. It now seems as if the wider philosophy of the Theosophic teaching with its recognition of the Deity as well as of the animal in man were at last destined to be the Saviour of Christendom from this hideous nightmare which has so long oppressed her heart.

As every new mode of expression may help towards further illumination, here are a few pregnant extracts from another book on the subject. And let the religious, who wrap themselves round in self-woven robes of Divine consolation, as well as the worldly, who wear out their souls in a meaningless round of material pleasures, learn if they can, from them, how infinitely beyond the ken of either is the breath of that greater life to which we aspire. Consolation it certainly is not; the very first breath of it "turns a man giddy and sick; it seems no path—it seems to end perpetually; its way lies along hideous precipices, it loses itself in deep waters." At each one of the terrible initiations of the soul, not only in the "Valley of Amazement," does the well-known cry rise spontaneously to the lips, "If it be possible, let this cup pass from me." But each one is a gateway in the path that leads out of all human experience, and though the remunciation of our humanity may to us be awful, who that has once tasted of that greater breath of the Godhead would be dastard enough to refuse so glorious a destiny? And so the final thought completes the well-known verse, "Nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt."

"Many have hoped to pass through by the way of religion, and, instead, they have formed a place of thought and feeling so marked and fixed that it seems as though long ages would be insufficient to enable them to get out of the rut.

"Some have believed that by the aid of pure intellect a way was to be found, and to such men we owe the philosophy and metaphysics which have prevented the race from sinking into utter sensuousness. But the end of the man who endeavours to live by thought alone is that he dwells in phantasies and insists on giving them to other men as substantial food. Great is our debt to the metaphysicians and transcendentalists; but he who follows them to the bitter end, forgetting that the brain is only one organ of use, will find himself dwelling in a place where a dull wheel of argument seems to turn for ever on its axis, yet goes no whither and carries no burden.

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* For a more complete and philosophical explanation of this deeply mystical subject of Avatars, the reader is referred to the second and third of a series of four lectures on the Bhagavad-Gita, by T Subba Row, published in the "Theosophist" of March and April, 1887.

"Virtue (or what seems to each man to be virtue—his own special standard of morality and purity) is held by those who practise it to be a way to heaven. Perhaps it is, to the heaven of the modern Sybarite—the ethical voluptuary. It is as easy to become a gourmand in pure living and high thinking, as in the pleasures of taste, or sight, or sound.

"Gratification is the aim of the virtuous man as well as of the drunkard; even if his life be a miracle of abstinence and self-sacrifice, a moment's thought shows that in pursuing this apparently heroic path he does but pursue pleasure. With him pleasure takes on a lovely form, because his gratifications are those of a sweet savour, and it pleases him to give gladness to others rather than enjoy himself at their expense. But the pure life and high thoughts are no more finalities in themselves than any other mode of enjoyment; and the man who endeavours to find contentment in them must intensify his effort and continually repeat it, all in vain. He is a green plant, indeed, and the leaves are beautiful; but more is wanted than leaves. If he persists in his endeavour blindly, believing that he has reached his goal when he has not even perceived it, then he finds himself in that dreary place where good is done perforce, and the deed of virtue is without the love that should shine through it. It is well for a man to lead a pure life, as it is well for him to have clean hands, else he becomes repugnant. But virtue, as we understand it, now can have no more special relation to the state beyond that to which we are limited than any other part of our constitution.

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"In man taken individually, or as a whole, there clearly exists a double constitution. Two great tides of emotion sweep through his nature, two great forces guide his life; the one makes him an animal, and the other makes him a god. No brute of the earth is so brutal as the man who subjects his godly power to his animal power. The man who becomes a beast has a million times the grasp of life over the natural beast, and that which in the pure animal is sufficiently innocent enjoyment, uninterrupted by any arbitrary moral standard, becomes in him vice because it is gratified on principle. Moreover, he turns all the Divine powers of his being into this channel, and degrades his soul by making it the slave of his senses. The god, deformed and disguised, waits on the animal and feeds it.

"Consider, then, whether it is not possible to change the situation. The man himself is king of the country in which this strange spectacle is seen. He allows the beast to usurp the place of the god because for the moment the beast pleases his capricious royal fancy the most. This cannot last always: Why let it last any longer? Let the king resolve to change the face of his Court and forcibly evict the animal from the chair of State, restoring the god to the place of Divinity.

"Ah! the profound peace that falls upon the palace. All is indeed changed. No longer is there the fever of personal longings or desires, no longer is there any rebellion or distress, no longer any hunger for pleasure or dread of pain. It is like a great calm descending on a stormy ocean; it is like the soft rain of summer falling on parched ground; it is like the deep pool found amidst the weary thirsty labyrinths of the unfriendly forest.

"But there is much more than this. Not only is man more than an animal, because there is the god in him, but he is more than a god because there is the animal in him.

"Once force the animal into his rightful place, that of the inferior, and you find yourself in possession of a great force hitherto unsuspected and unknown. The god, as servant, adds a thousand-fold to the pleasures of the animal; the animal, as servant, adds a thousand-fold to the powers of the god. When these forces are unfitly related, then the being is but a crowned voluptuary without power, and whose dignity does but mock him. For the animals undivine at least know peace, and are not torn by vice and despair.

"That is the whole secret. That is what makes man strong, powerful, able to grasp Heaven and Earth in his hands. Do not fancy it is easily done. Do not be deluded into the idea that the religious or the virtuous man does it. Not so. They do no more than fix a standard, a routine, a law, by which they hold the animal in check; the god is compelled to serve him in a certain way, and does so, pleasing him with his beliefs and cherished phantasies of the religious, with the lofty sense of personal pride which makes the joy of the virtuous. These special and canonized vices are things too low and base to be possible to the pure animal, whose only inspirer is Nature herself, always fresh as the dawn. The god in man degraded is a thing unspeakable in its infamous power of production.

"The animal in man, elevated, is a thing unimaginable in its great powers of service and of strength."

Earthly experience being the great teacher, no man while he remains but man can say that he has gone through all that is necessary, but when the passionate desire for any given experience has passed away—driven out by a more potent desire—it is but logical to assume that that particular lesson has been learned. In the upward striving of the creature man, many are the desires that animate his soul. Satisfaction of his appetites, physical well-being, cover a vast field in the lower region. Domination over his fellows, distinction among men, are higher motives of action, but higher than all is the ideal love—so high, indeed, as to be destined soon to be effaced by the unparalleled refulgent

glory of the Highest. The soul may be destined to undergo much suffering before complete Detachment is attained, but "gradually as it dwells more habitually in the thought of the Supreme and Ineffable Deity, the idea of a visible or tangible communion with any Being less august becomes repugnant to the mind."

The friendships or loves of past years may become hallowed by memory, but the power of any man or woman to thrill the being will have passed away. The mighty Goddess of Truth is sole Queen of the heart now, and she alone is now capable of controlling its tides of emotion.

PILGRIM.

# KARMA AS A CURE FOR TROUBLE.

THE greatest problem in human life is its sorrow. From some form of trouble not one of us is free. The happiest and most envied of men knows the meaning of bodily pain, of mental unrest, of sadness from disappointment, fear, or loss. How much more, then, those who are continually ill; those who are anxious over to-morrow's bread; those who, perhaps, have not bread enough for to-day. And to such as are suffering from cold and hunger and sharp discomfort in every form, there is added the bitterness of seeing wealth and luxury and ease in the hands of others whose characters and lives show no greater merit, perhaps less manly strength.

Every man asks why there is suffering in the world; but the poor man particularly asks why he is made so to suffer. He revolts at the seeming injustice of human lot, clenches his fist at the sight of finery and extravagance, possibly curses the earth whereon he lives in misery, while his brother man has everything he can desire. None of the explanations given him satisfy either his reason or his feelings. The political economist states that inequalities in social life are the necessary effect of high civilization; that you cannot have workmen without business, nor business without capital, nor capital without luxury; and that strength of mind has as much right to its gains as has strength of body. The candidate for office urges that this is all the consequence of evil laws, and that, when laws are made better, comfort will be more general. The parish clergyman tells him that it is the will of God, and that we are not to question its wisdom, but submit to its authority. He has been pleased to make a few rich and many poor, some healthy and others weak, all to have trouble but most to have much of it, and that we must accept the fact with devout resignation, not eye it with doubt or bitterness.

But these arguments do not seem wholly to meet the case. Much sorrow of mind and much suffering of body exists for which they do not account, and it is not clear that the inequalities of life arise only from higher civilization or from unjust laws. Still less is one satisfied with the explanation of partiality in God, of a Fatherhood which is sympathetic only to a few of its children and wholly indifferent to the rest. And the hungry, shivering pauper does not look up

with reverence to the skies if he thinks that thence comes his misery and his pain.

There must be some better solution of the problem of human suffering if the mind is to be satisfied, the moral sense content, the inner spirit braced. And it is just here that Theosophy, the great teacher and inspirer of humanity, comes in with its doctrine of *Karma* as explaining and justifying the facts of life as we know them. This doctrine holds that men are what they have made themselves, that their lot has been fashioned by their own acts, that they suffer or enjoy because they have earned either suffering or enjoyment. The condition in life is not an accident; it is an effect. But most men will say, "How is this possible? My condition began with my infancy; how can it have been determined by my conduct since? Your doctrine implies that I am as I am because I so prepared myself in a previous state!" To which Theosophy replies, "Precisely so. This is not your first earth-life, nor perhaps your hundredth. In the slow process by which Nature led you up from infancy to manhood, your life was composed of distinct days, separated from each other by nights of sleep. So in that slower process by which she is educating you from the lowest stage of human littleness to the highest plane of godlike wisdom, your existence is composed of distinct lives, separated from each other by periods of withdrawal. In these lives you act and learn, and form your character; as is that character, so are the lives which follow and express it. Re-birth, re-incarnation, is the law of human development; you come again and again into the world that you may improve and advance and struggle upwards to perfection. Karma expresses the extent to which you have done so; you are now what you have made yourself; your condition is that for which you are fit."

"Yet how can this be?" it is honestly asked. "Do poverty or riches, feebleness or power, obscurity or rank, indicate the merit or demerit I have gained?" "Not at all," answers Theosophy; "but your degree of happiness does. Happiness does not depend on wealth or station; sorrow does not needfully follow small means or small influence. Joy and sadness are conditions of the mind, influenced, no doubt, by bodily surroundings, but not determined by them. The rich are not always happy, hence not the standards of past good; the poor are not always wretched, hence not the standards of past wrong-doing. It is the state of the mind, not the state of the purse, which shows what Karma implies in any case."

If any man once clearly sees that his present condition is but the result of his conduct in prior lives; that it means and expresses, not merely what he has done, but what he *is*; that it is not an accident or a freak, or a miscariage, but a necessary effect through invariable law, he has taken the greatest step towards contentment, harmony, and a better future. For note what clouds this conception clears away, and what impulses towards improvement it at once

begets. The sense of injustice disappears. He may not, cannot know the past careers of which he feels the now effects, but he knows what their quality must have been from the quality of those effects. He reaps as he has sown. It may be sad or pitiable or distracting, but at least it is just. Envy disappears also. Why should he envy the greater happiness of those who, after all, have a right to it, and which might have been his too if he had earned it? Bitterness is assuaged. There is no room for such when it is seen that the causes for it do not exist, and that the only person meriting condemnation is oneself. Best of all, there dies out resentment at Divine favouritism, that peculiarly galling belief that the Supreme Being is wilful or capricious, dealing out joys and sorrows for mere whim, petting one child and chastising another without regard to moral worth or life's deserts. In such a being confidence is impossible, and the only theory which can restore it is the theory of the Karmic Law, a law which is no respecter of persons, regards each man precisely as any other man, notes the very smallest acts in its complete account book, enters their value in the precisest terms, and when the time of settlement arrives—be it in the same incarnation or in one far off on the great chain—pays it with scrupulous fidelity. Centering thus responsibility for each man's lot in himself alone, Karma acquits Providence, calms resentment, abates discontent, and vindicates justice.

But it does even more than this; it stimulates endeavour. If we are now what we have made ourselves, we shall be what we make ourselves. The mould of the future is in our hands to-day. The quality of later incarnations does not arise from chance, or from a superior Will, but is simply such as we impart to them through our present. Responsibility, power, are ours alone. It is just as certain that re-birth will be upon the lines we trace in this life, as that the latter part of this life will be upon the lines traced in the former part. Re-birth is, in fact an expression of character, and character expresses what we are and do. He, then, who desires a better re-incarnation must better his present incarnation. Let him perceive the faults which mar his life—the sloth, the repining, the rashness, the thoughtlessness, the covetous spirit, the evil of hatred or uncharity—and let him master them. Above other faults, and embracing all, is that of *selfishness*, the sad love of personal desire as against the rights, the privileges, the happiness of brother men, a love which inflames every lower element in the human constitution, and kills all higher and richer sentiment. He who would prepare for himself a happier rebirth, may begin by making happier the lives of others. He may respect their rights, consult their feelings, extend their pleasures, generously sacrificing himself that they may profit. As he so does, his own higher nature is manifested, and finer satisfactions greet him with an unalloyed delight. By a blessed law of being, he who thus loses his life shall save it; for he not only tastes richer pleasure than any possible through selfish effort, but he moulds his character in the grace and beauty of

true manliness, and he moulds, too, that new incarnation which is to fit the nature formed in this.

Certainly a principle which quickens the highest motives in human nature may well be the regeneration of human life. He who sees his present as the product of his past self, who foresees that his future will be the product of his present, who finds in Karma the unfailing treasury for every effort and every toil, who desires that re-birth shall have less of pain and more of gladness than he knows of here, will seek in generous service to fellow-men the highest happiness of his highest faculties, and trust for brighter incarnation to that law which cannot break, that force which cannot fail.



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# THEOSOPHY & MODERN SOCIALISM.

By J. BRAILSFORD-BRIGHT, M.A. Oxon.

# PRACTICAL WORK FOR THEOSOPHISTS.

By ANNIE BESANT, F.T.S.

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# THEOSOPHY AND MODERN SOCIALISM

THE writer of an article on "Brotherhood" in the December number of LUCIFER has given an erroneous impression of Socialism, which, as a student of Theosophy (I do not know if I can yet call myself a "disciple") who has been in a large measure drawn to this great study *through Socialism*, I may, perhaps, be allowed to correct. Indeed, I should feel that I was shirking a task clearly indicated to me at the present moment were I to leave such errors, so far as all the readers of LUCIFER are concerned, uncorrected.

"T. B. H.," the writer of the article in question—an interesting and, I believe, useful article in many respects—has, I venture to conjecture, confused the general system or class of systems known as Socialism with certain methods of propagating its principles. Let me commence by quoting the paragraph in his article to which I take exception. He says (LUCIFER, No. 3, p. 213):—

(1) "Socialism, as preached during this nineteenth century, it [the Universal Brotherhood, which is the mainspring of Theosophy.—J. B. B.] certainly is not. (2) Indeed, there would be little difficulty in showing that modern materialistic Socialism is directly at variance with all the teachings of Theosophy. (3) Socialism advocates a direct interference with the results of the law of *Karma*, and would attempt to alter the *dénouement* of the parable of the talents by giving to the man who hid his talent in a napkin a portion of the ten talents acquired by the labour of his more industrious fellow."

I will first take the three statements contained in this paragraph separately, and, for convenience's sake, in inverted order. The allegation against Socialism contained in the third is the most specific, and that which, in the eyes of Theosophists, must appear the most serious. This statement—namely, that "Socialism requires a direct interference with the results of the law of *Karma*, and would attempt, etc."—constitutes, in fact, the only definite premise in his argument. Of course, if Socialists do advocate, consciously or unconsciously, anything of the sort, they advocate a physical and psychical impossibility, and their movement is doomed

to failure. More than this, if they do so *consciously*, they are sinning against the light, and are impious as well as childish in their efforts. Of such, clearly, the Universal Brotherhood is not.

But neither Socialists nor Socialism, "as preached in this nineteenth century," does anything of the kind.

By "materialistic" Socialism, I presume "T. B. H." implies (if he has really *studied* Socialism at all, which I venture to doubt) so much of it as can be argued upon purely worldly grounds, such as the better feeding, housing, etc., of those who do the active work of society, technical instruction, such general education as fits a man for the domestic and secular duties of life, and the reorganization of society with these objects upon a "co-operative basis," in which public salaried officials, elected by their fellows, will take the place of capitalists and landlords, and in which the production and distribution of wealth will be more systematically regulated. This system, of course, takes no account of the law of Karma.

In a rough sort of way, however, all Socialists recognise the law, so far as its effects are visible in this world in the physical, intellectual, and moral planes. The fact that "the evil that men do" (and that classes and nations do also) "lives after them," none are more ready to own and act upon. The action and re-action of individual *will* and individual and social *circumstance* both upon each other and upon individual and social *conditions* forms part of the foundations of Socialism. *Qua* Socialists, we do not, of course, take any more account of the law of Karma than do non-Socialistic Christians and Agnostics, but I maintain that there is nothing whatever in Socialism repugnant to this law. If anything, indeed, it is the other way. All Socialists, whether they call themselves Collectionists or Anarchists, Christian Socialists, Communists, or purely economic Socialists, are anxious to give freer play to human abilities and social impulses, by creating leisure and educational opportunities for all. We may thus, if it is permitted to me to speculate while criticising, become the instruments of a greater equalization and acceleration of Karmic growth, "good" or "evil," upon and among individual souls during their incarnation upon this planet. This would come to pass by the transfer of a great deal of the responsibility for Karmic results—which now lies with each individual in his personal capacity—to the collective entities composed of individuals acting in public capacities, *e.g.*, as nations, provinces, communes, or trade corporations.

It is surely accurate even now to speak of a collective—*e.g.*, a national or municipal—Karma, as we do of a national conscience. We speak of reward or retribution to nations and cities as if they had distinct personalities; are these mere figures of speech? But what is more important is that Socialists may prepare the way for a revelation of the

noble truths of Theosophy to the multitude; they may help to raise the intellectual and instinctive moral standard of the whole community to such an extent that all will, in the next generation following after the Social Revolution, be amenable to these truths. In this way, Socialism would not, indeed, interfere with the results of the law of Karma, but would, as the precursor of Theosophy, be the indirect means of enabling multitudes to rise and free themselves from its bonds.

As to the parable of the talents, well, Socialists would be only too glad to see its moral better enforced in this and other civilized countries. To them it seems impossible that it could be less enforced or taken to heart than it is now. They see that under the present system of society—that vast engine of usury, by which whole classes are held in economic servitude to other classes—many are encouraged to live in sloth and hide their talents, even if they put them to no worse use. This could hardly happen under a *régime* of economic Socialism (such a *régime*, for instance, as Lawrence Grönlund contemplates in his "Co-operative Commonwealth"), for these able-bodied or talented citizens who declined to work would simply be left to starve or sponge upon their relatives. Under a purely Communist *régime*, no doubt there would be a few who would shirk their proper share of social work, but at least none would be brought up from infancy, as now, to "eat the bread of idleness."

Finally, on this point, if to advocate such changes as Socialists advocate—the substitution of social co-operation for competition; of production with a view to use for production with a view to profit; of peace between nations, classes, and individuals, for war; of harmonious organization, to the advantage of all, for *laisses faire* and chaos for the advantage or supposed advantage of a few—if, I say, to advocate such changes be to advocate an interference with the results of the law of Karma, so must be every proposal for the amelioration of the physical or intellectual welfare of our fellows. And if participation in this and other movements, which may with equal justice be called materialistic, be prohibited to Theosophists, they may as well, for all the good their Universal Brotherhood will do to the masses of those at present outside it, stay at home and content themselves with communing with the select few who alone will ever be in a position to appreciate them. If, for one reason or another, they do not care to co-operate with Socialists, let them at least recognise that the latter are preparing their way for them, doing the dirty (?) and laborious work without which Theosophy can never descend, from the serene heights on which it now dwells, to enlighten spiritually this sadly benighted world. For, apart from a healthier physical and psychical atmosphere than civilized life engenders in either rich or poor (collective Karmic

effects), a fair amount of leisure and freedom from sordid care is indispensable to most human beings for the higher development of the perceptive or gnostic faculties. At present this minimum of leisure and economic independence is probably unattainable by nineteen-twentieths of the population, yet this self-same society, with its scientific learning and experience, its machinery, and its business organization, contains within it all the germs of such a reconstruction of the physical environment as shall very shortly place the means of spiritual and psychical regeneration within the reach of all.

"T. B. H.'s" second statement is that "Indeed, there would be very little difficulty in showing that modern materialistic Socialism is directly at variance with all the teachings of Theosophy." Such an expression as "materialistic Socialism" is, as I have already hinted, erroneous. *All* Socialism is materialistic in the sense that it concerns itself primarily with the material or physical conditions of mankind. So do chemistry and mechanics, pure or applied; so, in ordinary politics, do Liberalism and Conservatism. *No* Socialism is materialistic in the sense that it is based upon any materialistic as distinct from spiritualistic or pantheistic conceptions of the universe. It has hardly any more to do with such questions than have cotton-spinning or boot-making. I do not, however, pretend to mistake "T. B. H.'s" meaning. Taking Socialism in its purely economic aspect (which I admit is the foremost for the present, and must remain so until disposed of), he asserts that "there would be very little difficulty in proving," etc. This is a mere general charge against it, although, I think, a less plausible and, therefore—from the point of view of harmony between Socialists and Theosophists—a less serious one than the particular charge which follows it, and with which I have already endeavoured to deal. For my own enlightenment I would like to have some samples, taken at random, of his skill in showing this variance; but I doubt if such a demonstration could effect any good. Moreover, it is impossible to *answer* the charge on account of its vague, albeit sweeping and all-comprehensive, character. "All the teachings of Theosophy" are quite too much for a student like myself to attempt to compare them with economic Socialism as a system. Nor do I think one with ten times the learning and discernment that I can claim would readily attempt it. I merely record, therefore, my sincere conviction that on this general point "T. B. H." is also mistaken, and that it is not Socialism, economic or otherwise, which he has really been scrutinizing, but the sayings and doings of some particular "Socialist" whom he has seen or read of. Individual Socialists have, of course, many faults which cannot fairly be charged to the social and economic tenets they profess. Thus one besetting fault of militant advocates of the cause is the use of violent

language against individual capitalists, police officials, and landlords. It is so easy, even for men of a calibre superior to the average, to be drawn on from righteous indignation against a corrupt system to abuse of the creatures and instruments thereof, or even, on occasion, to personal violence against them. Every good cause has its Peters no less than its Judases. Socialism, unfortunately, has a rich crop of the former. Another still worse fault on the part of certain agitators, but one which might easily be predicted from the character of the struggle and the condition of the classes who must form the backbone of the Socialistic party, is the frequent appeal to lower motives, such as revenge and love of luxury.

But such faults, although by all human prevision necessary incidents in the movement, are by no means inherent in Socialism. Even the purely "materialistic" Socialism of Karl Marx, to which "T. B. H." seems (although, I think, not with any clear picture of it in his mind) to refer, aims simply at securing the decencies and ordinary comforts of life to all as a recompence for more evenly distributed social labour. The very conditions of life under a co-operative commonwealth such as Hyndman, Grönlund, and other followers of the late Karl Marx's economic ideal, have in view, above all the obligation (virtual, at any rate) under which every able-bodied member of the community would find himself or herself to do a few hours of useful work of one kind or another every day, and the elimination of the commercial and speculative element, with the wretched insecurity and dangerous temptations which it involves, would preclude inordinate luxury. A healthy simplicity of life would become first "fashionable," then usual. Communism, of course, goes further than econonomic Socialism, as it implies not only the claim of the individual upon the community for the means of *labour* and the enjoyment of its fruits or their equivalent, but his claim for *subsistence*, irrespective of the amount and social value of the labour which he is able to perform. It would abolish, therefore, not only individual property in the means of production, but in the products themselves. The practicability of Communism, the motto of which is "From each according to his abilities, to each according to his needs," obviously depends upon the prevalence of more generous motives, of a higher sense of duty both to work and to give, a more perfect development, in fact, of the sense of human solidarity. It is for this very reason more commendable than mere economic Socialism, as an ideal, to the attention of Theosophists, although its appreciation, on the national or universal scale, cannot yet be said to have entered "the sphere of practical politics."

Communism, which may be either collectivist or anarchist, leads me to add a few words about Anarchism. I refer, of course, to the social

ideal philosophically denoted by this name, and not to the means advocated by some of its supporters for putting an end to the present society. Anarchism involves Communism as well as extreme decentralization; more than this, it involves the abolition of all permanent machinery of law and order such as the State is supposed to provide, and the abolition of physical force as a method of suasion even for criminals and lunatics. As a protest against political domination of all kinds, and an antidote to the excessive centralization advocated by some State Socialists, Anarchism may be of some use; but it is obviously further even than Communism (of the collective variety) from becoming a school of "practical" politics. It could only become so after society at large, all the world over, had grown sufficiently homogeneous and *solidaire* for its members to co-operate automatically for all necessary purposes, grouping themselves into large or small organizations (limbs and organs) as required, and forming a complete *body social*, or Mesocosm, if I may be allowed to coin a word for the purpose.

The erroneous conceptions of Socialism which I believe "T. B. H." to have formed do not necessarily invalidate the first statement in the paragraph of his article upon which I have been commenting, to wit, that the Universal Brotherhood which he has in view (and which, I understand from him, forms a part of the programme of the Theosophical Society) is not "Socialism as preached in the nineteenth century, or at any other time, past or future, for that matter." Still I am inclined to hope that a more intimate study of Socialism will lead him to see that, whether identical or not, they are at any rate not antagonistic. My own belief is that Theosophy and "materialistic" Socialism will be found to be working along different planes in the same direction. Any Universal Brotherhood of Theosophists must be based upon Socialist principles, *inter alia;* its foundations may extend further and deeper than those of Socialism, but cannot be less extensive. Greed and war (political or industrial), social caste and privilege, political domination of man over man, are as out of place in a true brotherhood as wolves in a flock of sheep. Yet the exclusion of these anti-social demons and the enthronement in their place of Universal Love and Peace, if effected by such a Brotherhood, would simply leave Socialists nothing to do but to organize the material framework of their co-operative commonwealths. To preach economic or "materialistic" Socialism to a world already converted to the highest and completest form of Socialism would be to advocate the plating of gold with tin or copper.

Modern Socialism, if the noble aspirations of some of its apostles may be taken as an earnest of its future, is already developing (incidentally, of course, to its main economic and ethical doctrines) strong æsthetic and

spiritual tendencies. No reader of William Morris or Edward Carpenter, to speak of English Socialists only, will fail to notice this. At present the mass of Socialists content themselves with basing their social and economic faith upon the ethical principles of Justice, Freedom, and Brotherhood. But the highest, because most mystical, of these principles, that of Brotherhood, or better, Human Solidarity—the ancient conception of "charity"—forms the unconscious link between modern Socialism on the one hand and Esoteric Buddhism, Esoteric Christianity, and Theosophy generally, on the other. I say *unconscious* link, but I mean to imply that it may soon be rendered conscious and visible. As the various "orthodox" varieties, first of Christianity, then of Mahomedanism, perish with the collapse or destruction of the social systems that have grown up along with them, this simple religion of Human Solidarity will take possession of the deserted shrines of Christ and Allah, and will begin to seek out its own fount of inspiration. Then will be the time for the Universal Brotherhood of Theosophists to step into the breach.

I must now turn to certain higher aspects of Socialism and the modern Socialist movement, at which, hitherto, I have done little more than hint.

I am partly guided in this task by Mr. Harbottle's letter in the January number of LUCIFER, which indicates some points of variance or misunderstanding existing between us. I trust that even if this article fails, as it may well do, to effect a complete reconciliation on all points of disagreement between Socialists and those Theosophists who are at present opposed to Socialism, it may at least elicit a few sparks of truth in the mere process of "clearing the issues." I shall not attempt to treat the two parts of my subject, that which refers to the economic and that which refers to the higher aspects of Socialism, separately, as they are too intimately connected with each other in their relationship to the Theosophic movement to permit of their being conveniently separated.

I have already endeavoured to show that Mr. Harbottle, and any who think like him, are wrong in supposing that Socialism or its adherents advocate "a direct (or for that matter, *any* kind of) interference with the results of the law of Karma." I have admitted that if I were mistaken, Socialism was foredoomed to failure. But surely Mr. Harbottle must agree with me, for he states, and very justly, that "the Socialist movement is itself a part of the cyclic Karma." But I hardly find him consistent with himself when he goes on to add that "in its endeavour to rectify what seem, from its limited point of view, injustices, it cannot fail to be unjust to those, the justice of whose position in life it declines to recognise." What does this mean? Can a *part*, or as I shall prefer to express it, an *agent*, of Karma, be accused of injustice? If so, QUIS

CUSTODIET IPSOS COSTODES? Surely not either Mr. Harbottle or myself, or any other contributor to LUCIFER.

When I suggested that Socialists might be regarded as "the instruments of a greater equalization, distribution, and acceleration of Karmic growth," and that this would come about "by transferring a great deal of the responsibility for Karmic results which now lies with each individual in his personal capacity upon the collective entities composed of individuals acting in public capacities," I implied much the same as I understand Mr. Harbottle to mean when he speaks of the Socialist movement as a part of the cyclic Karma. But I implied rather more than he does. Many other much less important movements than the Socialist may be equally regarded as forming part of the great cyclic Karma. Even reactionary movements (that is to say, movements contrary to the now prevailing tendencies of human and social evolution) may claim, inasmuch as they form part of the inevitable back current, to be described in the same language; and those who take part in them may claim to be the inferior agents of Nature—although, of course, if they do so in obedience to their own lower instincts and prejudices, and not "according to their lights," they will individually suffer for it. The same, for that matter, applies to those who are helping the main or forward currents, but from selfish motives.

The real question, then, for Theosophists to consider is not merely whether Socialism forms part of the cyclic Karma, for that is not worth their while disputing, but whether it forms part of the progressive and main evolutionary current, or of the retrogressive back current. If the former, as I firmly believe, then those who at present oppose it may not, indeed, all be constrained to turn back, like Saul of Tarsus, and fight on its side: some may conceive they have higher work to perform in Nature's service, or work more adapted to their powers and opportunities. But let them, at least, examine and ascertain for themselves, according to their lights, the true answer to this question before they continue to *oppose* Socialism, lest haply they be found fighting against the gods.

Let my suggestions on the subject stand for what they are worth. I may state my own position rather more elaborately and "scientifically," by saying that I believe we have reached a stage in human evolution on this planet in which a great many of the activities, and corresponding responsibilities, formerly attaching to individuals as such, are about to be, or are actually in the course of being, transferred to collective entities, or aggregations of individuals acting in a collective capacity, such as municipalities, unions or communes, provinces, nations, and confederations. I do not, of course, mean to imply that individual activities, individual progress in this life, will become merged and lost in collective progress,

but simply that in the action and reaction of the individual and social entities, the importance of the influence of the latter will *increase*, while that of the former *relatively decreases*. Physiology teaches us that in the lower forms of animal organisms, the life of the constituent organs—nay, even of the constituent protoplasmic cells—is much less dependent upon that of the entire body, than in the higher forms. So also in the case of social organisms, as I read evolution. Since the break-up of the primitive European civilizations (primitive, at least, so far as extant history, comparative politics and archæology enable us to see), which seem to have developed communistic social organisms on the tribal scale, the current of social evolution was set, until quite recently, in the direction of Individualism.*

This Individualism may be said to have culminated in the material plane in Modern Industrialism, or individual and class monopoly in the means of production; in the intellectual plane in the supremacy of the Baconian method of experiment; in the moral plane in Utilitarianism, and in the spiritual (where that retains any substance) in Calvinism. But even while at the height of its power—say 1850-70—Individualism carried within it the seeds of its final destruction. The principles of a new society had already been formulated by reformers and "Utopians" of various schools, while the growth of discontent among the uncomfortable classes more than kept pace with that of sympathy among the comfortable. The evolutionary current has now distinctly changed its course and is running at a daily-accelerating speed in the direction of a more perfect Communism—a Communism no longer on the tribal scale, but on the national, or possibly in some departments of the social activities on a still larger scale, and founded on a more complex yet more solid basis. In this higher form of social life, the interests and destinies of each member or component cell of the social organism will be more closely bound up than in the past with the organic whole. Mr. E. Belfort Bax, of the Socialist League, has recently expressed the final possibilities of communistic solidarity in a sentence which I shall do well to quote. It comes at the end of a series of articles entitled "The New Ethic" (THE COMMONWEAL, February 4th to February 25th), written from a materialist rather than pantheist standpoint, which contain, nevertheless, a great deal of interest for Theosophists. Speaking of "the inadequacy of the individual

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* It is to be remarked that ancient Pantheism decayed about the same time as ancient Communism, making place for the various exoteric sects of classical times, and (save for a few lucid intervals in which great teachers stepped forward to redeem as much of humanity as possible from the materialistic superstitions in which it was steeped) for the newer systems known as Catholicism, Orthodoxy, Protestantism, Mussulmanism, Modern Buddhism, etc. In pure philosophy it gave way to various materialistic and spiritualistic schools of thought; Spiritualism and Materialism representing simply the face and obverse of the coin of individualistic philosophy.

as an end to himself"—the basis of the new Ethic—he suggests that we may regard this growing sense as "the indication that the *final purpose* of society, as such, is not to be merely for the consciousness of its component personalities, but that they are in the end destined to be absorbed in a corporate social consciousness ; just as the separate sentiency of the *organic* components of an animal or human body are absorbed in the unified sentiency and intelligence of that body."

But just as in the evolution of animal life, of man himself, form has preceded substance in its manifestations, so in the social evolution also. Just as in the physical body rudimentary organs appear, and develop almost to perfection before their complete uses are discovered or revealed, so in the social body, parts, if not the whole of the framework of the harmonious organisms of the future, will be evolved (if some of them have not been already) before the perfect harmony can be attained. There can be very little doubt that Economic Collectivism, based partly upon existing political forms, and upon existing national aggregations, is the next stage of social evolution, the preliminary or provisional form in which the new society will manifest itself. Few Socialists are so sanguine as to suppose that the present generation will see the realization of the higher ideal, perfect Communism ; but most believe in the possibility—at any rate in those countries like England, France, Belgium, and America, where Individualism has most completely run its course—of realizing economic Socialism, or Collectivism, within a decade or two. The triumphs of State and Municipal Socialism on the one side, and of Co-operative Capitalism on the other, are continually preparing the way for the democracy to follow as soon as it gets the chance, while the increasing number of persons engaged in them forms the leaven of administrative ability which will secure the success of the Collectivist Commonwealths when once they are established.

The first evident advances effected by the Social Revolution will certainly be in the material domain, and this is the only sense in which I am ready to admit that the Socialist movement is *materialistic*. So, of course, are all other movements having in view the material welfare of those who suffer under the present social order, or, rather, disorder. The abolition of chattel slavery in the British possessions, and subsequently in those American States which had previously recognised it, was the result of a humanitarian movement strictly analogous to and comparable with the modern Socialist movement, so far as its advocacy by the middle and "comfortable" classes is concerned; but not nearly so unselfish, since many of those who advocated it had everything to gain by the abolition of the competition of slave-labour with that of "free," or wage-labour. The present middle-class advocates of Socialism, that is to say of

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the abolition of the wage-labour system itself—a system entailing in many places a much worse and more degrading form of slavery than that of the plantations *—may fairly claim that there is no element of self-interest in their advocacy, for the material benefits which would result to them by the immediate establishment of Socialism, in any of its forms, are very doubtful. They would be saved the risks of bankruptcy and ruin, it is true, but in other respects many of them would have to give up their existing advantages, and betake themselves to industries and services, for which their former lives had ill-fitted them.

As to working-class Socialists, of course they are fighting for the material redemption and emancipation of their own class; but I think it ill-becomes their opponents among the privileged classes, those who under the present system of society live on their labour, to accuse them of selfishness and "materialism" because they wish to relieve themselves and their children of their present almost intolerable burdens. Of course, I do not claim for the victims of the present system that they are as a class one whit less selfish *by nature* than their masters and conscious or unconscious oppressors. Many of them may even be suffering, as Mr. Harbottle seems to suggest, from the evil Karmic growths which they have accumulated during past existences. But that is not for their fellow-men to judge. Nor would it, if true, justify those who become aware of the material causes of their suffering in this life, and who are able to help them in destroying these causes, in raising the old cry, "Am I my brother's keeper?" What Socialists are now endeavouring to make plain to all, is that *everyone* is, in his political or *collective* capacity, his brother's keeper. He is shirking his duty as a conscious agent of evolution, that is of Nature, if he refuses to recognise this.

Even Economic Socialism, therefore, has its higher aspect. The cultivation of solidarity or fraternal co-operation among the wage-slaves and their friends for the emancipation of labour all the world over, the cultivation of the sense of collective or corporate responsibility among all, for the victims of the present Social Juggernaut of capital and privilege, is the very essence of the movement, even in this its most "moderate" but most "materialistic" form. The spirit of solidarity and collective responsibility must, of course, precede as well as accompany, and result from, the progress of the economic movement. It stands to the latter in the relations of cause, accessory, and consequence. Modern civilization, with all its rottenness, has proved a blessing in this

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* It was to the *advantage* of the owners of chattel-slaves to take care of them, if only in order to preserve valuable property in a condition of efficiency, whereas the capitalist employer of "free" labour (labour free to accept his conditions or else starve) has no such sense of interest in the health and well-being of his "hands," whom he can replace when worn out without any fresh outlay.

respect, that it has developed within it this motive force for its final regeneration. Capitalist production has necessitated the massing together of the workers in large towns, under miserable conditions compared with those of the independent artisans of the towns and villages of olden times; but these very conditions have taught them the necessary lesson of their material inter-dependence, and enabled them better to grasp the higher notion of the inter-dependence of Society and the world at large. Socialism has, then, come to take hold of and develop this germ of the spirit of solidarity, guiding the people in their vague aspirations towards social co-operation, and giving them a definite ideal. Thus the motive power, generated by past economic conditions, is developed by Socialists and utilized for the destruction of old and the production of new economic forms, which in their turn shall generate new and higher motive forces. This, I think, must be recognised as Nature's own course of evolution, so far, at least, as our free-thinking intellect and ordinary means of observation can ascertain. Thus the Form (Economic Socialism in practice) will be found to precede the substance (complete Human Solidarity, or the Spirit of Socialism), but depends for its own evolution upon a less-perfected Substance (the Spirit of Solidarity), which is itself the product of pre-existing Forms. But both the form and the substance, which will eventually carry us much further than Economic Collectivism, are evolving simultaneously; and from the higher standpoint of Theosophic Pantheism I can see no good in attempting to dogmatize as to which precedes, or ought to precede, the other. Let us merely admit that they are so mutually dependent, that the one cannot be good and the other evil.

But if it be true that the Socialist movement, in its practical effects, is confined for the present to the material domain, that its first victories would be in that domain, and that its present supporters for the most part do not look beyond it, I cannot concede that there is nothing in Socialism to command the attention of Theosophists from higher points of view. The movement to my mind is simply part of the great evolutionary current which is bringing back the true Golden Age, the age in which Humanity and Divinity, Love and Wisdom, will once more be united as they have never been within historical times. Economic Socialism I look upon simply as the necessary form which precedes, and foreshadows, the substance. The man cannot become a complete man until he has first become a complete human animal; the divine spark has no temple yet to occupy. Neither can society at large in any nation or world become a true spiritualized organism, until it has first evolved the form necessary for the development of something like what Mr. Bax has termed a corporate consciousness. If the present capitalistic *régime*, with its seething warrens of

human misery, will come to be regarded by posterity as Laurence Grönlund describes it, as the teething period of society, the next, or collective *régime*, will doubtless correspond with the school. Its individual members having been run for a generation or two into the same educational mould, and class distinctions and antipathies having died a natural death (their social and economic roots being destroyed), society will acquire the cohesion of a well-ordered family, and the next step, under Communism, to complete fraternity and solidarity, will be a comparatively easy one. It will be for society the zenith of sensual, æsthetic, and other purely human pleasures, as youth is for the individual. But the potentialities of the higher life will already have been realized by many, and *all* will be growing ripe for self-revelation of the higher truths.* I look forward to a time when it will be just as exceptional to find an individual destitute of that *auto-gnosis* which may become the instrument of psychic regeneration and development, as it is now to find one born both deaf and blind, and thus incapable of intellectual development by educational processes. The social commonwealths of the future will act first as physical and intellectual, then as psychical and spiritual, forcing-houses for humanity. I do not mean to say that any evolution or revolution of the social structure will change the sum total of experiences, painful and pleasurable, for each individual, but that in the existence or existences which he passes under the coming *régime*, the liberties and opportunities for experience of all kinds being enormously multiplied, he will be *ripened* at a much faster rate; also that the difference between the average and the extremes of individual conditions will be very much reduced. If I am right in this forecast, I may truly maintain that Socialism, although itself but part of the evolutionary current now prevailing, does and will act as the precursor of *supra*-evolutionary progress, and is calculated to "raise the intellectual and instinctive moral standard of the whole community to such an extent that all will, in the next generation after the Social Revolution, be amenable to the truths of Theosophy."

Roughly, my idea as to materialistic and utilitarian tendencies is that these will, under the social commonwealth, *burn themselves out*. The grosser forms of luxury, which have flourished so easily under modern capitalistic and ancient slave-owning communities, will be almost impossible in a state of society in which idle and parasitical classes are abolished. Industry and social equality will not be fruitful soil for such vices. On the other hand, free scope will be given to the development of the more social luxuries, and especially to the arts. Great

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* To prevent all misapprehension, the writer wishes to say that he has not himself embraced the higher life, and lays no claim to any higher intuition than is possible for those who, like himself, are living both in the world and of it.

reforms will, no doubt, be introduced at an early period in the physical education of children, and in the ordinary personal habits of all the citizens. These reforms, partly individual, partly collective, in their initiation, will of themselves tend to extinguish many of the vicious (that is to say, anti-natural) impulses of the present generation. But vice and sin are, in many respects, merely relative terms to knowledge. To whom much is given, from him much will be expected; and there may be quite as much evil in one age, in relation to its opportunities, as in another.

I do not assert that the above represents the general view taken by Socialist thinkers of the future evolution of society, and its individual components. Few care to look so far ahead; nor, indeed, would it be profitable or advisable for those who do to utter their ideas broadcast among mixed audiences, or to publish them in their militant Socialist organs. As Socialists, they address themselves to the mass of their average. thinking fellow-citizens, and find it a sufficiently hard task to impress the latter with these fundamental economic truths upon the acceptation of which the most necessary, immediate work of the movement depends. But I do assert that the chief writers and expounders of the different schools of Modern Socialism agree in looking forward to future results far transcending the economic domain. No student of the question who has attended lectures of the educational class delivered by the leaders of the English Socialist groups, or who has acquainted himself with the higher views and aspirations published in the text-books, and in English, French, or German papers and magazines,* will deny this. The economic revolution is, to the more serious thinkers in the

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* Let me take this opportunity of naming a few short works, pamphlets, and periodicals, treating the Socialist question from other aspects besides that of simple economic justice.

*Text-Books, etc.* :—

Hyndman and Morris's "Summary of the Principles of Socialism." (Modern Press, 13, Paternoster Row.)

Grönlund's "Co-operative Commonwealth." English Edition, by G. Bernard Shaw. (Modern Press.)

Edward Carpenter's "England's Ideal." (Swan Sönnenschein and Co.)

Edward Carpenter's "Towards Democracy."

Maurice Adam's "Ethics of Social Reform."

Krapotkin's "Appeal to the Young." (Modern Press.)

W. Morris's "Art and Socialism." (Reeves, 185, Fleet Street.)

*Periodicals* :—

"The Commonweal." Weekly. Revolutionary Collectivism and Communism. (Socialist League Offices, 13, Farringdon Road )

"Freedom." Monthly. Communistic Anarchism. (Leaflet Press, 19, Cursitor Street, Chancery Lane.)

"To-day." Monthly. Socialism in general. (Reeves, 185, Fleet Street, E.C.)

"The Christian Socialist." Monthly. (Reeves, 185, Fleet Street.)

"Brotherhood." Monthly. (Reeves, 185, Fleet Street.)

"La Revue Socialiste." Monthly. Socialism in general. (B. Malon, 8, Rue des Martyrs, Paris.)

The above are all short and low-priced.

movement, merely a stepping-stone to the physical, intellectual, and moral regeneration of man and society.

An ideal of "Brotherhood" which "begins and ends in physical existence," is certainly not a fair description of the Socialists' ideal. Indeed, the very words employed carry the refutation of their intended application. When we are speaking of persons allied for some purely material and either bad or indifferently moral object, such as the construction of a road, the consumption of a dinner, stock exchange "operations," house-breaking, robbery, and swindling, political party victories, and the spoils of office, we may call them "bands," "gangs," "syndicates," "groups," or "parties," &c., but we should not think of calling them "brotherhoods," unless in the jocular and ironical sense. Socialism, on the contrary, like Theosophy and the higher religions, creates such bonds of spiritual intimacy between its disciples as demand warmer and closer terms, like "brotherhood," "comradeship," and "solidarity." Socialism, when completely grasped, rises in the hearts of its disciples to the rank of a religion, and thus justifies the half-mystic naturalism of some of its poetry and oratory. Socialists may already be said to constitute a great Universal Church, *minus* dogmas and priestcraft—undesirable appendages which, let us hope, we may never be cursed with!

I cannot refrain from quoting here a few sentences from the end of the twelfth chapter of Grönlund's "Co-operative Commonwealth," which shows how near to the Theosophic knowledge even an agnostic Socialist can be carried in his speculations. Discussing the religion of the New Order, he says: "The thought of being alive somewhere a thousand years hence is so pleasant, and life—bounded by the cradle and the grave—so futile, that mankind will probably cling to their belief in immortality, possibly reconciling it with their intelligence by setting up some distinction between personal identity and the memory of the transitory circumstances of our physical life, and holding that the former persists with alternate consciousness and oblivion, as in this life, whilst the latter vanishes. The religion of the future is likely, in our opinion, to be a form of belief in a Will of the Universe. Our own nature suggests this; evolution illustrates it; and all existing forms of thought have in common the conception of a Supreme Will as Providence for humanity, though not for the individual, entering into vital relations with the individual only through humanity as the mediator, and commanding the interdependence of mankind. Religion may thus be elevated from a narrow personal relation between the individual and his maker into a social relation between humanity and its destiny."

The attitude of Socialism towards the various religions existing in

different countries, whether orthodox "State" religions or unorthodox or "Dissenting," is one of supreme tolerance. State subvention and protection to any form of religion would, of course, be withdrawn by the Social Commonwealth, but religious persecution of any kind would be equally conspicuous by its absence. Ecclesiastical corporations would probably not be allowed to occupy land or pursue industries under any different conditions than those which were permitted to other corporations; but this would be the only form of restriction to which religious sects would be subjected. Thus Mormonism and unpopular and even charlatanesque creeds might be allowed greater liberty than in America or any other "civilized" State under the Old Order. The influence of the State under the New Order would be positive rather than negative or restrictive. "The Eternal No" would not be heard so incessantly as it is now. The sphere of the State would be confined, so far as possible, to the administration (or rather regulation*) of the business of the country, and the education of the young. The latter would, no doubt, include a great deal more than it does at present; the physical, æsthetic, and moral (in the sense of *social*) education of the children would be provided for quite as carefully as the purely intellectual. At the same time, as the object of such education would be to produce, or rather assist Nature in producing, healthy, helpful, and self-respecting men and women—good citizens of this world—and not to instil any doctrines as to past or future existences, or duties having special reference thereto, it would be purely secular in its character. The *basis* of morality would not be defined either as religious or as utilitarian. Morality itself, or, as some would prefer to term it, *sociality*, would be instilled into the minds and hearts of the children very much as in the "well-bred" families of to-day notions of honour and "gentlemanly" or "lady-like" conduct are instilled: notions and sentiments which probably exercise quite as important influences for good or evil on the morals of the present generation, among the "upper" or privileged classes, as any religious principles. Social honour, social solidarity, and finally human solidarity, would replace family honour, "clannishness," and patriotism. Social life would replace in importance, without necessarily destroying, family life.

This social life of the Co-operative Commonwealth of the future will by no means entail the dull uniformity of habits and character which some, who have been frightened by the bugbear of *equality*, imagine.

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* The direct administration of the various departments of production, distribution, exchange (except with foreign countries), locomotion, etc., would probably be left, in a populous country like Great Britain, partly in the hands of democratically constituted trade corporations, partly in those of provincial, county, and communal administrations.

Artificial equality is, of course, neither possible nor desirable. The constituent elements of the new. society, ethnological, religious, intellectual, and otherwise, will necessarily remain as varied and unequal—for a generation or so, at any rate—as they are now ; but they will be better assorted, better synthesized and harmonized. Imperfect types, intellectual or psychical, and crude beliefs, will not be crushed out under the New Order ; but they will simply die a natural death like bed-sores on a convalescent patient. The object of Socialists, as distinguished from Absolutists and pseudo-Socialists, like Bismarck and some of our legislators at home, is to give Nature a free hand, or rather, having studied her tendencies, to assist and co-operate with her ; that of the Absolutists and Authoritarians is either to imprison and "suppress" her, or, by way of variety, to put her in harness and lash her forward along a road which she had no intention of taking. Some of these Absolutists call themselves Revolutionists, but the revolution which they would prepare is one which Nature would resent and revenge herself upon by kicking over the traces in a bloody reaction. Such revolutionists are far from numerous in the ranks of modern Socialism ; when found, they generally turn out to be *agents provocateurs*.

The genuine Social Revolutionist leaves the dangerous and immoral weapons of compulsion, provocation and suppression to the enemy—the weapons he advocates are political and economic liberty and education. Compulsion and suppression he would only apply to the idlers, the thieves, the violent, and the dissolute—those ill-favoured products of a chaotic and corrupt civilization. These he would coerce only so far as may be necessary for the safety and welfare of the rest. If the Social Revolution cannot be effected without violence, that will be, not because Socialists try to force the changes they wish to realize upon Society before it is ripe for them, but because the class or party in power, in its own selfish determination to suppress them, takes the initiative in violence.

This leads me to say a few words about Mr. Harbottle's objection that we Socialists have such "an innate hatred of domination," coupled with the astounding assertion that "we are prepared to substitute for the *existing* domination of *intelligence* (the italics are mine), that of mere numbers." The latter assertion I hardly care to reply to seriously. Anyone who knows how, even in the most democratic countries of the present *régime*, like France and America, the poor candidate is handicapped, however intelligent, will agree with me that the field of popular selection is virtually limited to such intelligence as is coupled with wealth. Now, such intelligence is not necessarily of the highest order—often quite the contrary. Socialists, at any rate, mistrust it very much as a "dominating" force in politics. Moreover, Mr. Harbottle is

perfectly correct in the first part of his statement—Socialists *have* "an innate hatred" of "domination" of *any* kind. The only authority which they agree to recognise is that of the freely-elected official or administrator during his term of office, or until dismissed. The present direct electoral methods, by which one man may be chosen by ten or twenty thousand to "represent" them in an assembly several hundred miles off, would not be followed. Bourgeois Parliamentarism will die with the transitional civilization which has produced it. The Social Commonwealth will be both an aristocracy and a democracy in the best sense of those words—the people will select the best men and women for the time being, and according to their own collective judgment, to administer their business, and will pay them fairly for their work; but will take good care that they do not become their masters. Domination, indeed, strictly speaking, will be impossible under any ideal Socialist *régime*, whether Collectivist or Anarchist. But when from this premise, viz., our hatred of domination, Mr. Harbottle argues that no Socialist could accept a "spiritual hierarchy," he is quite beside the mark. A spiritual hierarchy, so long as it remains that, and becomes nothing less, cannot possibly become a domination, for it is only submitted to *voluntarily*, by persons who have made up their minds to the divine character of its authority; nor is this submission enforced by physical or spiritual threats. A papacy is, of course, quite a different thing, but I presume Mr. Harbottle does not suggest that Theosophists must subject themselves to such an institution. If so, I fear I am still far from becoming a perfect Theosophist. For the rest, as I have said already, citizens of the Social Commonwealth will be every bit as free to submit themselves to whatever spiritual control their consciences dictate, as in the freest of the "free countries" of capitalism.

Of all the movements of the present day to which thinking minds are being attracted in large numbers, Socialism is probably that which exercises the most educative and expansive effect on the character, both moral and intellectual. Of course I am placing Theosophy outside the reckoning; it is a study for which very few minds are at present matured. But Socialism, in breaking down the barriers of prejudice and of class or intellectual conventionalisms, will, in this way, if in no other, prepare many for that further revolution in thought, and in the aspirations of the soul, which is implied by the term Theosophy. I maintain as I have suggested—without attempting to argue it out—that Socialism will be found by those who study it impartially to be part, if not the most important part *for the present*, of the general Pantheistic movement, which will culminate in the regeneration (in the highest sense of the word) of humanity at large on this planet. I do not read

"Light on the Path" in the exclusive and dogmatic sense in which Mr. Harbottle construes (as it seems to me) a certain passage in it, although there is no book that I have ever read which brings conviction to me of *so much* truth in so small a material compass. After all, no faith can be higher than the truth, and if I have succeeded in this very imperfect and, I fear, ill-connected article, in putting others in the way of getting at more of it than they would have done otherwise, regarding the relation of Modern Socialism to Theosophy, and in dispelling some errors regarding the former, I shall not have written them in vain.

J. Brailsford Bright, M.A., Oxon.

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# PRACTICAL WORK FOR THEOSOPHISTS.

Every person who enters the Theosophical Society is bound to accept its first principle, the assertion of the Universal Brotherhood of Man; but it is to be feared that with large numbers of the Fellows the profession remains an empty phrase, too like the "dearly beloved brethren" of the Churches, without bearing on life or effect on conduct. No antithesis can be discovered which is sharper than that between the principle of Brotherhood and the Class-and-Mammon-worship of modern society; no links of true fraternity bind together the dwellers in palaces and the dwellers in slums; no golden bands of sympathy unite the wealthy and the poor. Yet Altruism remains only a name so long as it is severed from personal service of Humanity, and Theosophy is merely a new form of glorified selfishness for those who "take it up" from curiosity, or from the desire to know, merely that the knowledge may be a personal possession and powers be attained for the sake of wielding them. At the great gate of the Temple of Knowledge stands the Guardian, and if to his question: "Why dost thou desire to know and to achieve?" there comes any answer but: "That I may the better serve Humanity," the candidate for admission should be sent back to his spelling book, until he has learned the alphabet of Altruism.

Let us suppose that all the latent powers of the Human Intellect and Will could suddenly be developed in the men and the women around us as by the touch of a magician's wand, and that they could step forth into the world clothed with supersensual knowledge and power: what would

it avail, save to make this world a worse hell of contending passions than it is to-day, in which would rage Titanic contests of selfishness and greed, rendered the more horrible by the mightier powers of those engaged in the fratricidal struggle? Not until the brute in us is starved out of life; not until the lower self is slain and only the voice of the Higher Self is heard; not until personal desire has been lost in the desire for humanity; not until all ambition is dead, save the ambition to serve; not until this point is reached can power be safely trusted in human hands. Those who lightly enter the Theosophical Society, imagining that thereby they will at once spring into the exercise of the higher human capabilities, have to learn that the capacity to lead the Higher Life must precede the capacity to wield the higher powers. Hence the long probation insisted on for every candidate; the deep study which ensures that knowledge shall precede Power; the tests which bar the way towards the higher planes of being. And since character grows out of habits, and habits out of acts often repeated, there is no better school for forming habits of unselfishness, no surer way of moulding the selfless character, than by doing personal acts of service to our brothers and sisters struggling in the sad environment made for them by our modern civilization.

First must come the real honest feeling of equality, not the verbal profession, but the inner conviction. Unless this exists, all work among the poor tends to become demoralising both to helper and to helped, breeding self-complacency in the one and subserviency in the other. Every act must spring spontaneously from the brotherly relationship; so that aid, comfort, counsel, whenever given, shall be the free and loving gift of brother to brother, so that respect of the highest in the lowest shall breed self-respect, and charity, in rebecoming Love, shall purify and raise and not degrade. But, I repeat, the feeling of equality must be *real*, all social castes merging into the human brotherhood, so that there is no consciousness of difference whether speaking to prince or pauper, the man and the woman becoming everything and the rank nothing.

Then comes the cleansing of one's own life in its relations to those by whose labour we are fed and clothed and housed. Every article that we use embodies so much human labour, and if we use it, we are bound to render back for it due equivalent of our own labour. If this be not done, we are robbing instead of exchanging, soiling our lives by theft. And here I speak to Theosophists belonging to the "middle" and "upper" classes, for the poor, already crushed by labour, are forced to buy what they need for subsistence at the lowest rate at which they can obtain it. This is not so among the richer, and they are bound to see that they do not vicariously sweat the workers by their purchases of "cheap goods."

In this matter women are the worst sinners, buying gowns and other articles of clothing at prices which they know cannot cover the cost of material and a fair wage to the needlewoman. If they would personally employ the needlewoman instead of buying her work from the shop, they would not dare to pay her the starvation wage which they pay her through the hands of the middlemen; and they would not then be wearing garments soiled perhaps by the harlotry which has been fled to for a piece of bread. If they cannot manage this personal employment, they can easily ascertain who are fair and who are unfair employers by writing for information to Miss Clementina Black, 198, High Holborn, London, W.C., who has exerted herself to form a Consumers' League of persons ashamed to live by sweating their neighbours. It is hardly necessary to add that the personal life of the Theosophist should be frugal, simple, and free from luxury, both for the sake of his own inner development, and in order that he may live honestly, not taking more than he gives.

The personal life thus purified, there remains the active service due to our fellows. Each must here judge his own capacities and opportunities, but there are two or three lines of work in which painstaking and cultured men and women are much wanted at the present time. For instance, some might serve as managers of our Board Schools, attending to the remission of fees, supervising the tone and method of instruction, noting if the children are properly fed, organizing free meals for those in need, and giving to the teachers the sympathy and friendliness which they so sorely lack in their arduous and responsible labour. There are openings for useful and far-reaching service in this line of work second, perhaps, to none, bearing as it does on the training of the citizens of the future as well as on lightening the burdens that press so heavily to-day.

Women, with leisure on their hands, can find a way of using that leisure in the service of others by writing to Allen D. Graham, 18, Buckingham Street, Strand. Mr. Graham, some time ago, finding that invalided children were constantly being sent from the hospitals to poor, overcrowded, and often dirty homes, suggested that kind-hearted folk might each take charge of two or three of such children, visiting them, playing with them, taking them out, and, in fact, generally "mothering" them. These little ones, ailing and feeble, suffer terribly in this rough hurrying world, and much pain might be saved, much pleasure given, by a little sacrifice of time and trouble.

Another form of service, open to the wealthier, is buying shares in companies whose servants are notoriously overworked, and then attending the shareholders' meetings and insisting on shorter hours, higher

wages, and better treatment all round. The dividends from the shares can be paid into the Union fund of the employees where a Trade Union exists; where there is no Trade Union, no more useful work can be done than urging the men or women to unite and aiding them in the first uphill steps of organization.

These suggestions may serve as examples of the kind of service which is crying aloud to be done, of practical profession of the Brotherhood of Man. I am not putting them forward as remedies for the evils inseparable from the present order of Society. As a Socialist, I know but too well that all such work as this can only act as palliative, not as cure; none the less will it lighten some of the darkness around us, and, in the absence of the sun, farthing dips are better than unbroken Cimmerian gloom.

It is obvious that, in addition to such duteous Service of Man as I have been glancing at, there are other duties incumbent on every member of the T. S. Those who can use their pens should answer objections or expose slanders made in the columns of our ordinary press; most editors will put in a tersely-written clear reply to attacks made in their papers. And all should study Theosophical teachings, both for their own culture and for the assistance of others. It is not enough to set our own feet on the Path; as soon as we are able we should guide thitherward the feet of others; and in order that we may be competent for the task, we must study, study, study. The subtle metaphysics of Theosophy will attract but the few; few, again, are likely to feel the call to climb the rugged path to those heights on which the Masters sit serene. Neither its philosophy nor its possibilities of growth will avail much to recommend it to the superficial thinkers or to the luxurious livers of our day. But the sight of noble lives, strenuously and selflessly working for human good, battling against poverty and sorrow, the twin-daughters of Ignorance, these will justify Theosophy in the eyes of the world, proving that self-devotion can exist apart from superstition, that clear-eyed Intellect can walk hand-in-hand with the Love that saves.

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# THEOSOPHIA, OR DIVINE WISDOM.

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The term "*Theosophia*" means "Divine Wisdom," and many have asked what this expression signifies. There have also been many who have attempted to describe it; but they have often signally failed; neither is it surprising that they should fail, for no one can truly describe a thing unless it exists within his own knowledge. How could anyone have any true knowledge about Divine Wisdom unless he were in possession of it, and therefore himself, in some moments at least, divinely wise? nor would it be possible for any truly divine being to bring such a thing to the correct understanding of inferior minds; for they likewise cannot realize anything that does not exist within themselves. We are all so constituted that we can only know *truly* that which exists in our own consciousness, and can but understand that which exists in the consciousness of another in so far as that consciousness is similar to our own. Only a God could truly explain what God is, and only gods could understand his explanation. Only a man in possession of wisdom can have a true conception of what wisdom is. Our writers on "Theosophical" subjects do not claim to be divine beings, and it would perhaps be difficult to find even among those who call themselves "Theosophists" a single individual who is divinely wise. It is, therefore, not surprising that even among the leaders in what to-day is mis-named "Theosophy" the greatest confusion of ideas exists in regard to the signification of that term.

But if we are incapable of understanding what divine wisdom is, we may at least form an approximately correct conception of what it is not, and of what it cannot be; for the rule that the nature of a tree is known by the character of its fruits holds good not only with regard to terrestrial trees, but also in the realm of ideas.

When, soon after the formation of the "Theosophical Society," it became known that certain Adepts living on the other side of the Himalayan mountain range had at last relented from their long silence, and were giving instructions of a high and exalted kind about the true nature of man and the constitution of the material universe, there were many who could see in this nothing but the establishment of a new creed, and they imagined "Theosophy" to be the acceptance of this new creed without ever attempting to realize within

themselves the exalted truths they were thus taught, or trying to experince within their own consciousness the fact that they were more than intellectual animals.

High and exhalted and true as the doctrines of the Adepts may be, they are to those who are not capable of realizing their truths within their own consciousness nothing else but opinions and speculations; such persons will credulously accept one creed or one theory to-day; because it seems plausible to them they will swear to the truths of the last book which they have been reading; and to-morrow they will find another contradicting all that they have learnt from the former, giving more plausible views and opinions, and then they will spurn the belief which they had adopted at first and agree to adopt another, until this likewise becomes displaced by one still more plausible. The Adepts may give us information about what they know, but they cannot give us their *Wisdom;* the knowledge of an Adept cannot become the self-knowledge of a disciple; it must unfold and develop within the soul of the latter himself. To live and be satisfied in the realm of mere creeds and opinions and theories is surely not divine, and to imagine one knows something about which he has no self-knowledge is not wise. Such a condition cannot constitute true Theosophy.

To realize in this case what the term "Theosophy" means, we should seek to become capable of knowing the truth not from mere hearsay, but by perceiving it within ourselves; to see it as it is, and not what we or others may imagine it to be; to open our souls to the influence of the Divine Light of Love and Intelligence, to learn how to send our thoughs to the innermost centre of our own being, and to do our own thinking instead of thinking only the thoughts of another. Such would be *practical* Theosophy, and there can be no other but a practical one; for a kind of wisdom which exists merely in theory exists merely in the imagination and cannot be real. If we were to acquire the true power of perceiving the truth, we could then be capable of seeing for *ourselves* whether or not that which the Adepts have told us is true; we would need no further information, whether it be obtained from books or from teachings handed down by tradition; we would not merely believe, but *know*, that the Microcosm and the Macrocosm are one, and knowing our own Microcosm we would also know the Macrocosm of the universe and everything contained therein. We are a long distance away from such a divine state, and those who cannot conceive of such an idea will scoff at the suggestion of its possibility; but if such a state is at least at present beyond our reach, if we are not gods and goddesses, but merely mortal men and women, we should at least be modest, and realizing our insignificance, not call ourselves "Theosophists" nor apply to our petty knowledge (if it deserves that name) the term "Divine Wisdom."

There is another class of writers who tell us that "Practical Theosophy consists in going about remedying the mistakes which divine justice or the law

of Karma have made; to give alms and to spend our money on benevolent institutions. They tell us that Practical Theosophy is to lead a moral and "virtuous" life and avoid doing evil. There is no doubt that charity, benevolence, humanitarianism, morality, and that kind of virtue which consists in the avoiding of evil are relatively very good things; but if they are identical with "Theosophy," there is then no reason why they should be called by different names, as one would have been amply sufficient. Theosophy, however, means "Divine Wisdom," and so make it and the practice of almsgiving identical, it would be necessary that he who desires to give alms should know exactly all the conditions under which he who is to receive it exists. If these are not known, the alms given might be sorely misapplied and do far more harm than good, and our wisdom would then not be the wisdom of God, but that of the devil, which is the outgrowth of ignorance. For instance: a case is known to the writer where a poor man and his wife occupied a lodging house in a city. They were never able to pay the full amount of the rent, and month after month were in arrears. The landlord, however, was a kind and generous soul; he suffered them to remain, and the man, counting upon this generosity, stayed, but instead of exerting himself to find remunerative work, took to drinking for the purpose of drowning his grief. At last the house was sold, and the new owner, less merciful than his predecessor, promptly ejected the poor people, who, not being able to find another refuge to lead an idle life in the city, betook themselves to the country and began to work, when they became prosperous within a comparatively short time. Here it would appear that the harsh landlord manifested unknowingly more wisdom than the generous one. An act performed without any knowledge of the results it will produce is certainly not divine wisdom, however laudable the act may have been. True Theosophy is quite a different thing.

Again, the practice of morality cannot be identical with real Theosophy. "Wisdom" means the knowledge not only of Good, but also the knowledge of relative Evil, and without a knowledge of evil the knowledge of good cannot be acquired. The soul of man is nailed to the cross of material suffering so that he may obtain knowledge of the absence of good and its consequences, and strive for that which is good. Suffering is the best friend and teacher of mankind, and he who would deprive a man entirely of suffering, would steal away his best treasure. He who gets naught but enjoyment from the senses may be dragged down still deeper in the mire of the sensual world; while he who suffers may have a longing aroused within his soul for another realm where the life of the external senses ceases and pure spirituality alone exists. We cannot know the nature of the Tree of Knowledge unless we eat its forbidden fruit; a plant cannot draw strength from the earth unless it sends its roots into the darkness within. "Sin" begins only when man knowingly chooses evil instead

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of good, but when he already knows evil, there is no necessity for him to choose it again.

Theosophy proper has nothing to do either with virtue or with vice. It is above both of them. The idea of God *practising* morality is not less absurd than that of His practising immorality. There are thousands of human beings who are below virtue, and there may be some who are above it; but no one can rise superior to virtue unless he first comes up to its level. There may be some who imagine that they are above virtue, while they are far below it. To such we would say: "Rise up to virtue and then you may think of rising still higher up to Divine Wisdom." There are hundreds who, in the imaginary self-consciousness of their own superiority, look down with contempt upon the degraded, ignorant of the fact that a state of degradation may be a necessary lesson for the degraded individual, and that they themselves may have passed through such a school, and may have to pass through it again in a future life if they have not well learned their lesson. True "virtue" means "power," and he who possesses power may use it for good or for evil; therefore the wicked but powerful may, by applying his power in another and better direction, gain the Kingdom of Heaven; while the orderly, well-behaved, good-for-nothing moralist learns nothing, gains no experience, and no knowledge, and remains a weakling all his life.

Looked at from the standpoint of true Theosophy all the actions of men, the "good" as well as the "evil" ones, are foolish. To fight with shadows and to seek for imaginary knowledge from them is the business of man who lives in the land of the shadows; to rest in His own tranquillity, in His own divine self-luminous Light, is said to be the business of God. What does Divine Wisdom care about the joys and miseries of mortal beings, all of which belong to the shadowy forms and are merely imaginary? Little boys and girls amuse themselves with playing with marbles and dolls, grown people with love-making and seeking for money and fame. Some spend their energies to gratify their own vanities; some waste them with objects of trade, others by writing books; but if at the end the soul awakens to the realization of its own true state it finds that all these occupations, one as well as the other, are useless toil, and that life itself is a farce; the outcome of our own ignorance.

There are those who will say that these teachings are pernicious, and that we are advising mankind to be idle. Not so! Our subject under consideration is "Divine Wisdom," a thing known only to those who have outgrown the state of mortal humanity. Our doctrines are not for those who are climbing up to its level. There are laws governing the movements of the fish swimming in the water, and there are laws governing those of the eagle flying in the air. There are beings still inhabiting gross material bodies subject to the natural forces and principles that go to make up their constitution, and there are others who

know what it is to be *free;* beings that have become their own Masters, anp and who are not subject to the laws which nature imposes upon those that are her slaves. Only to the latter belongs Divine Wisdom; to the former is the imaginary knowledge of the world of illusions; a knowledge which is well enough as it is, and even necessary for the existence of those illusory beings; but which has nothing to do with that *divine* wisdom which belongs not to the speculating brain, but to the Soul of man. Our considerations are for those who wish to enter the realm of real Theosophy, and not for those who cling to the shadows of this material earth.

It is said that to attain to the comprehension of divine truth it is necessary to renounce not only the external world and its vanities, but also one's own material bodily self, which, like all other material things, is also nothing else but a passing illusion. This ought not to be misunderstood. It would be foolish to throw away our terrestrial possessions as long as we need them ourselves; but when we have outgrown our own semi-animal nature, when we have risen superior to our human condition; *then*, and then alone, will we no longer need the things which belong not to our true selves, but to the human nature by which we are controlled at present.

We are continually told that we must give up our own selves; that only those who die in the flesh will live in the Spirit; that the Adam in us must die, so that the Christ in us may be resurrected; but how can anyone give up a thing which he does not know? How can we give up a thing which is not in our possession, but which possesses us, and forces us to partake of its joys and its sufferings, and finally to perish with it, unless we have learned the way to Freedom? Is it not, above all, necessary that we should first learn to know that "Self" which we propose to renounce; that we should first learn what is that "Life" which we wish to give up? What would be left of a man who were to give up that self whose consciousness is his own, it being himself, and his all? What is to become of his immortality, if all that exists of him is mortal? What part of his being is to live for ever, if there is nothing in him capable of becoming conscious of such immortality? Is the cripple to throw away the crutches which alone enable him to walk, because they are not genuine legs? Or the beggar his pennies because they are not gold? We must first know ourselves before we can reasonably talk about giving it up. We must know the value of that which we propose to renounce. To give up a thing whose value we do not know cannot be *Divine Wisdom.*

No one but a very ignorant person would deny that there are but very few people (if any) in the world who know their own selves. We are made of "Matter," and do not know what matter is. We are surrounded and penetrated by "Life" and do not know what life is. We are capable of sensation and thought, but cannot tell where our sensation originates, nor what is that cause

which enables us to think, to will, and to love. Our inclinations change with our age, and our moods of mind with the state of the weather. Our health or disease does not depend on our own free will. If our nature wants sleep, we have to lie down and sleep; if it awakes, we awake; if it hungers, we have to feed it. Its enjoyment is our enjoyment, its suffering our suffering. So long as we are one with our human nature, we live and suffer with it, or rather nature lives and suffers in us, for we are one, and cannot live separate as long as we are not conscious of anything higher within us than our humanity.

What is that "nature" that lives and suffers in us? Is it a thing that has a life of its own, and a consciousness of which we know nothing if we are separated from it, as may be partly the case during our sleep? Is it possible that we, with all our self-conceit and imaginary greatness, are, after all, nothing else but forms in and through which universal nature feels and thinks, enjoys and suffers, and if so may it not likewise be possible that we might become instruments of a superior power, in and through which that superior power (or God) may live and act and bring forth a new and far higher state of Sensation and Life and Thought? Is it not probable, perhaps certain, that since nature is not self-existent, but, as external evidence shows, doomed continually to die and be reborn, that there is an *internal* divine power which causes nature to exist, and that our bodies may become instruments for the direct manifestation of that divine power, instead of merely its secondary effects in material nature? To know that divine power would constitute real Theosophy. When we are one with it as we now are one with nature, then we will know ourselves, and be entitled to be called Theosophists.

Every day's experience teaches us that we are surrounded by an ocean of natural forces, which, for aught we know, possesses no self-consciousness; but which becomes self-conscious in us when it enters our nature. Is it not then thinkable that there is likewise a still higher, universal and divine principle permeating all nature, in which divine wisdom exists, and which may under certain conditions become self-conscious within ourselves? If within ourselves was recognisable one spark of that principle, then all that would be necessary to come in possession of divine wisdom, would be to establish the conditions necessary for that spark to be roused into a flame. We would find that all knowledge exists within ourselves, only we are at present not conscious of it. We would perhaps find that the God in us knows more than can ever be told to us by any occult writer, even if he were an Adept, and that by becoming one with that God, we would be gods and know all the mysteries of nature existing within ourselves.

Is such a proposition merely hypothetical, or can its truth be proved? We care nothing for all ancient or modern authorities on the subject; their knowledge cannot be our own. What they say may be true, but we do not want to

know the truth from mere hearsay; we want to see and feel and understand it ourselves. We care not whether their assertions are plausible or not, nor whether their opinions are based upon sound logical inferences; we want to be taught by our experience. What does it concern us whether Plato or Socrates, Buddha or Zoroaster believed in this or that doctrine? As long as we do not know what they knew, a mere information about their beliefs would do us no more good than to know the exact amount of money which our neighbour has deposited in the bank, while we are beggars ourselves.

But where can we come in possession of real truth? Where can we find self-knowledge? When will the soul awaken to a consciousness of its own divine existence? When shall we realize that we are superhuman and gods?

It is self-evident to everyone who is capable of thinking, that self-knowledge can only be found within one's own self. If all our attention is taken up by studying the manifestations of nature on the external plane, we will have no other knowledge than that of external nature. If our attention is taken up in studying the manifestation of natural forces within our own constitution, we may obtain a fair knowledge of the nature of our own constitution; but if we wish to know the divine power that is said to exist within ourselves, we must direct all our attention to the manifestations of that divine power taking place within ourselves; we must watch its awakening, its birth and growth and development, and facilitate by all possible means these processes of "spiritual regeneration." This divine consciousness is "The Christ" and the Saviour, the Redeemer within ourselves; the immortal man within the tomb of living matter; the incorruptible body existing within the mortal Adam, whose life is illusive, because it is not his own, he being merely a creature of natural forces manifesting their life in his form. This divine consciousness is the power of God "made manifest in the flesh." Those who are in possession of it will know it, but to those who are not in possession of it, it can neither be described, nor can its existence be proved by any arguments which speculative philosophy may invent; nor would it be useful or advisable to prove to the vulgar the existence of that which they do not wish to know and which they do not desire; they being satisfied to live in their ignorance and to perish like animals in the end.

There can be hardly any more ungrateful task than that of writing books for the purpose of convincing the world of the existence of truths of which it does not wish to comprehend; and foremost of all, and most unwelcome, stands the teaching that we must cease to cling to and be absorbed by external material things, desires, and pleasures, before we can enter the higher life of the Spirit in which alone immortality can exist. What but a fraud and a swindle is all our external morality as long as our heart clings to the material pleasures of life and craves to commit the sins which we pretend to abhor? What but an unnatural monster is the man who is afraid to follow the dictates of his nature

for fear of receiving punishment, while at the same time he is unable and unwilling to rise superior to his own nature and to become her dictator? The sins which he does not commit on the outward plane are committed by him a thousand times within his own internal world; the evil forces which he accumulates within himself gain strength by resistance, until at last an explosion follows and his imaginary morality is at an end.

So long as we try to rise superior to nature, by resisting the action of nature within us, we commit what Eliphas Levi calls "crimes against nature"; and therefore it is said that the study of Occultism is beset with dangers for those who are not ripe for it, because, unable to rise above the realm of illusions to the regions of divine thought, and incapable of forming a correct conception of the meaning of the doctrines received, such persons seek to resist nature instead of rising above her, and in so doing they create monsters within themselves by which they may be devoured.

But what means has man to rise above his own nature? Can he give to himself anything which he does not possess? Can he dispose of anything which he does not comprehend?

There is no power by which man can rise above his nature except that power which is above nature, and which has been called "God" because it is considered to be absolute Goodness and free from evil; nor can he expect aid from any other divine power except from that which exists within him and which he may know if he seeks for within himself; for although all forces in the universe act from the outside upon the centres of the forms in which they become manifest, they can only grow from the centre towards the periphery. Man builds artificial houses by putting one stone upon another and nailing boards together; but that which God builds by means of nature, the external matter of forms, is born from the womb of time as a unit, and as a whole, like the seeds, in the kernel of which all the qualities of the matured tree are contained in a latent condition, waiting only for proper chances to be developedand unfolded, and to produce themselves new flowers and fruits.

Let the scientists, psychical researchers, and speculative philosophers break their heads over the solution of the problem, whether their insignificant knowledge is or is not sufficient to warrant them to accept a belief in the existence of God. Let the theologians dispute about the qualities of the gods which they have invented, and which exist nowhere except in their own imagination. He in whom the power of the universal God has become manifest, whose own interior realm is illuminated by the spirit of wisdom; he whose soul has become by the grace of God self-luminous in the Light of the truth may well laugh at such follies; he needs no arguments to convince him of the existence of God; he needs no books to describe to him that which he can see and feel himself;

he requires no doctrines from those who claim to be wiser than the God whose voice speaks to him in his soul; he asks for no priest to obtain for him a salvation which he has already obtained himself.

But to attain to such a divine state it is not sufficient to imagine one's self to be God; such a God would be merely an imaginary one and prevent man of finding the real; nor is it, as some have taught, sufficient to hypnotize or to magnetize one's self, or to "suggest" to one's self that one is God, until one is foolish enough to believe it. If we wish to attain such a divine state, it is necessary that all our attention should be directed towards its attainment; that we should look at the world and all material things merely from the standpoint of a disinterested spectator, who may permit his terrestrial personality to take a part in terrestrial affairs, if it is advisable to do so; but without allowing himself to be absorbed by them. The "God" in us, that is to say the spirit of Love and Truth, of Justice and Wisdom, of Goodness and Power, should be our only true and permanent *Love;* our only friend, a friend who will never disappoint us in our expectations; our only reliance in everything, our only "*Faith*," which, standing as firm as a rock can for ever be trusted; our only *Hope*, which never will fail us if all other things perish, and the only object which we must seek to obtain by our *Patience*, waiting contentedly until our evil Karma has been exhausted and the divine Redeemer will reveal to us his presence within our soul.

There is no use clamouring for the coming of the Redeemer as long as we keep our doors shut to keep Him from entering; nor can He be coaxed to come by the beating of drums and the braying of horns. The door through which he enters in is called "Contentment"; for he who is discontented with himself is discontented with the law that made him such as he is, and as God is Himself the Law, God will not come to those that are discontented with Him. To be satisfied with everything as it is, not on account of any indifference arising from ignorance, but on account of a true realization of the Cause which produces all things and of the nature of the effects it produces; this must be Divine Wisdom as far as we are capable to grasp it.

Seen from this point of view, what but a fool's-play is this terrestrial world with all its superficial glitter, in which there is nothing eternal or permanent, and nothing certain but death? What is its superficial morality, resulting from fear of punishment or hope of reward? What is its sham charity, exercised for the purpose of gratifying one's own vanity, and with the purpose of boasting and bragging about it? What are its philosophical speculations based on the plausibility of appearances, instead of on a knowledge of real truth? What are its scientific accomplishments, enabling the shells of men and women to live in comfort for a few years, and to be rapidly transported from one place to another, while their real selves, their souls, sunk in the mire

of materiality and sensualism, become more and more petrified in eternal death? What is vice and what is "virtue" except the outgrowth of the conditions by which man is or has been surrounded? What is *man* himself but an evanescent shadow, an organized centre resulting from certain vibrations of matter, and in which universal powers are manifesting themselves for the time being? There is nothing real in him but God. This God will continue to be when all the great phantasmagoria of the universe, created by his divine imagination, will have disappeared from the field of his own divine consciousness. He will continue to be in a conscious or unconscious state according to the amount of self-consciousness which he has attained within the forms which He created Himself. We are the instruments through which God awakens to His own divine self-consciousness, and to enable Him, by creating the necessary conditions, to attain the greatest amount of self-consciousness within ourselves, this alone is what we call *Practical Theosophy*.

It will therefore appear that from this point of view neither a belief in "Rings and Rounds" in *Kama Lora* or Re-incarnation, nor a belief in the possibility of the wonders of Alchemy, nor even the practice of morality and charity, or the giving of alms, is Theosophy. All these things may be both useful and good; external learning may be useful to those who are incapable of looking within themselves; the practice of virtue will develop the power to rise up to that level which one must reach before he can rise above it; but none of these are Divine Wisdom; they are merely steps leading up to the plane where Divine Wisdom begins.

Can those who have at least partly grasped the truth aid those who are unable to grasp it themselves? All that one man can do for another in this respect is to induce him to think. If the world were flooded with so-called theosophical literature, it would make no impression on those who had no desire for such information, while, for those who desire it, sufficient already exists. I, for one, believe that there is a law of divine justice, according to which everyone receives that which he deserves. To attempt to force one's doctrines upon the world, and to make proselytes of persons against their will, would mean to try to improve on the laws of divine justice and to assume the prerogatives of divine wisdom. I have invariably found that fruits fall from the trees when they are matured, and that those who desire spiritual knowledge find the way to attain it either by external or internal means. A candle lighted at night will be no adequate substitute for the light of the day, for when the sun rises everyone sees the light, and the candle is useless. Likewise there are in the spiritual aspect of the universe certain ruling constellations which were known to some of the ancients, and are known to modern enlightened minds. As long as the necessary constellations do not exist, all attempts to diffuse occult knowledge will merely create disturbances in the mental atmosphere and confuse the

minds,causing new quarrels, discussions, and sectarian difficulties. Only when the sun enters the sign of the *Ram*—that is to say, when *Wisdom* enters into *Power*—then will the eyes of the world be opened to behold the daybreak of a new morning, and like as a person, with a sigh of relief, awakes from a sleep that has been disturbed by a hideous nightmare, so will we awaken to the realization that "life" is a grand illusion, that we have been running after empty shadows, and that there is real life, and peace, and happiness, and knowledge to be found within the self-consciousness of eternal Truth.

# THEOSOPHY IN DAILY LIFE.

READING in the Sacred Books of the East, I came upon these lines:—

"He lets his mind pervade one quarter of the world with thoughts of Love, and so the second, and so the third, and so the fourth. And thus the whole wide world, above, below, around and everywhere, does he continue to pervade with heart of Love, far reaching grown great and beyond measure.

"Just as a mighty trumpeter makes himself heard, and that without difficulty—in all the four directions—even so of all things that have shape or life, there is not one that he passes by or leaves aside, but regards them all with mind set free, and deep-felt Love. Verily this is the way to a state of union with Brahma.

"And he lets his mind pervade one quarter of the world with thoughts of pity, sympathy and equanimity, and so the second, and so the third, and so the fourth. And thus the whole round world, above, below, around and everywhere, does he continue to pervade with heart of pity, sympathy, and equanimity, far reaching, grown great and beyond measure."

For this Scriptural injunction there is, of course, a reason. The mighty energy thus diffused through space not only attracts the divine, but it gives, it informs, it creates. On every plane it has its perfect work. On the highest, it becomes the messenger of the Perfect Law which is a Law of Love. Its processes can be scientifically considered and demonstrated in Theosophical thought. Its rule and subjection of the lower astral plane can be clearly shown. But what seems to concern us most with the opening of a new year, is its effect on the plane best known to the average man, or its application in daily life.

As Theosophists, we have given our adherence to the principles of Universal Brotherhood and a search for Truth. The most indifferent

member of our Society has still signed such a pledge, calling his word of honour to attest its reality. Some of us have gone much further than this. A consideration which presents itself to all alike, a reality which is no respecter of persons, is this: Are we or are we not conforming to the spirit and letter of that pledge? Are we endeavouring to form a *real* Brotherhood? I do not need to point out that intellectual enlightenment is only a means, and one of several means, to that benign end. It will be apparent to any thinking person that the intellectual germs which are the bearers of Truth must sprout and bear in our lives; must be transformed into deeds and thoughts impersonal, fraternal, and informed with universal love, or else they are mere withered husks which only encumber the mind that has received them. We may send our literature into every home; we may find our facts upon every man's tongue; and still our Society will be an utter failure as a vital, living Brotherhood if the spirit and activity of universal Love is not infused into it. No one can so infuse it but ourselves. Each individual is responsible for its absence, if it be absent, for it alone adequately represents our pledge. We have not given the attestation of our honour to a mere formalism, but to a Reality; to an unlimited energic Charity, without which we are indeed as brass and tinkling cymbals.

Hence no more urgent question now presents itself to the earnest student (or even to those whose "honour" keeps its pledges) than this one, namely: How shall I convert this philosophy into a working force which shall prove useful in daily life? It is true that the Theosophical code of ethics, were it followed by every individual, would change the face of the world in a day. It also follows that such influence must be of the greatest practical as well as moral use. If each one of us believed that every wrong done would as surely react upon us as that a ball thrown against a wall will rebound, and that what injures one man injures all, it is certain that all our ways of living and thinking would change, and that we should enter a wider sphere, a larger spirit of Life. We should then experience a spiritual, ethical, and practical consolidation or Brotherhood.

At the same time, this study and personal practice of the philosophy does not wholly fulfil our pledge. We are still in the world; its ties are more or less interwoven with our daily life, and for this world as it now stands we are largely responsible. All about us are wrongs and sorrows which only a change in the inner nature of mankind can exterminate. We know this change is far off in point of time and concerns the race, while our own personal efforts show us how difficult is its accomplishment. It is indeed not to be accomplished until we regard the entire universe

with thoughts of Equanimity and Love. What then shall we do? Shall we wait patiently for this change, striving meanwhile to lift ourselves and such comrades as may be drawn to hear our words to a higher inner life? If we do this much only, the change will never come. We have taken up the attitude of separation unconsciously, and the estranged world feels that we have deserted it in a need which the soul realizes, though the individual may not. In the inner attitude we are to stand aloof from the fever, the doubt, the selfishness, and carnival of desire; but the outer man must also fulfil his duty, and he does that by drawing close to his fellow-men and by working among them. Until the intuition of the race shall be more highly developed, men need to see our personal presence and activity before they can realize our spiritual sympathy. Just as we give object-lessons to a child, so our work explains to them the reality of our pledge and belief.

Spiritual advancement is not a result of mechanical (so to call it) cyclic progress, nor yet a result of the will of the gods. The progress of Law must be reinforced by human will and effort before the personal soul can be benefited by it. The way of the race is devious and long; it is accomplished through individual effort, and each real reform in institutions, in morals, in every department of Life, brings us one step nearer the goal. These things, external though they appear, may each be made the vehicle of higher powers, through the energy of universal Love. As witnesses to the expanding heart of man and to the vital growth of his belief in human and divine consolidation, they bring us inwardly as well as outwardly into closer relations with one another.

There are of course exceptions in the cases of persons who through their inward fitness have been called away from the world to enter upon a special course of training and service which shall fit them for duties upon other lines and planes than those known to individual life. All such persons have, at some time, worked ardently in the primary fields, and have, through such work, developed into more impersonal and more divine uses. They stood once where we now stand, and through proportional efforts in all directions, they have passed on. It is our part to follow them, and while we are still in the world we may be sure that a part of our work lies in it, and includes every practical as well as every spiritual effort towards realizing the highest conception of Universal Brotherhood.

There are many Theosophists who do not grasp the urgency of this question concerning the utilization of Theosophy in daily life. Perhaps some of them feel their own ignorance, their unfitness to teach, and wait to know more before they speak to other men. They forget that he who cannot teach can work. Our work teaches. Moreover, through unselfish

work we are taught. To learn intellectually, some may wait in vain; and indeed none will truly learn in any sense until they convert what little they do know into working force, just as our food is useless to us until its digestion has set free some amount of nervous energy, for whose translation into work Nature herself provides. All these natural processes are copies of those of the spiritual world, and thus all things bear witness to that Truth which is their Being. Other Theosophists are struggling with material cares; others do not stop to think of the real bearing of their professions of Brotherhood. In short, as many reasons for indifference prevail as were sent to the Biblical King when he bade his neighbours come to the wedding feast. Still, I believe the chief of these is the want of co-ordinated thought. Not so long ago an earnest student wrote to the American Head-quarters to say that through an appeal made to him for assistance in some work which was being done he had come to realize the necessity of such work and the lack of it that he was sure many others, like himself, were so preoccupied by daily cares that they had not waked up to the importance of helping the Theosophical movement in some direction, and he offered money to print an edition of a tract addressed to indifferent Theosophists, if some one would write it. These pages are the outcome, in second remove, of that work which stimulated him. As we light a fire by communicating to it the vibrations of a flame, so contact with the earnest effort of another sets free a corresponding and latent energy in the heart prepared for higher development.

These considerations are all the more pressing to-day. We are nearing the end of the cycle, and all events move more rapidly. Effort made now will have a far greater result than it would have later on. The momentum of a moving object depends upon the energy expended at its start, and those Theosophists, who are sufficiently intuitive to take advantage of cyclic currents and to work ardently with them and with the Great Powers, will find that they have laid up treasures there, where, to quote Emerson, compound interest is the rate of the exchequer. The credit of this exchequer is not personal man, but Humanity: what we give as individuals is repaid to the race. This is just, for from that race we spring in part. One year's work done now may fructify far more rapidly for this cause which is our own, than might ten years' work done at a less propitious time. It is true that materiality is now at its highest rate of progress, but with a latent downward tendency; while spiritual activity is accelerating with an upward tendency due to the present curve of progress. Can we doubt which will prevail? It is now in our power to secure the prevalence of spiritual activity in individual lives, just as the Law has already provided for its prevalence in the Universal Scheme.

There is scarcely one of us so poor that he cannot make some willing sacrifice, or has not some time or energy to give. Quantity does not matter so much as quality; it is the spirit of unselfish Love that works all wonders.

These thoughts accepted, the student asks himself where he shall begin, to what work lay his hand. For his personal life he alone can answer. If he be a member of the Theosophical Society, it will be well for him to work with and through his Branch; the greater the centre the greater the energy. Energy is proportionate to the square of the numbers producing it. The sum of energy produced by three united persons is nine times as great as that evolved by a single person. This ratio is due to the correlations of the forces employed. Where Theosophists have not joined the Society, they would do well to reflect on these facts. We are responsible for our latent possibilities. If we neglect to develop and enlarge them by joining a body pledged to Humanity, we must certainly be losers by our determined attitude of separation. We owe ourselves to others, if only for the encouragement of our external presence and support.

Turning our attention from individuals to the corporate Body itself, we find that we are reproached, and justly reproached, with doing little, if any, practical work. As we do not believe in indiscriminate missionary labours and argumentative conversion, we must seek other fields. Are there no children among us to be rescued from the doubts and confusion of our time? Where are our Branch Sunday Schools, where music, story and object teaching of spirit through natural lessons, may give the little ones a happy and valued hour? Where are our Branch free libraries, with one member told off weekly to attend them, open of an evening to all comers? Can we do nothing to help those social outcasts, so rarely rescued by formal religion, because, "the deed of virtue is without the love that should shine through it." It is vain to try to stop those who are on the fatally swift descent of sin, by assurances that some other, however divine, is responsible for them. If we can grapple their minds with the thought that they themselves are their own saviours and that we are integrally and actually their Brothers and Sisters, then indeed we may recover lost ground for the race. Everywhere great questions and great issues are confronting us and in some one of these each Branch should have a share. Not only should we join with outsiders in such good deeds as they have found to do, but we ought to have some distinctively Theosophical work of our own, first as individuals, next as Branches. For example, the competitive struggle and system of monopolies are working as much—if not more—injury as the use of intoxicating liquors. Everywhere thinkers of benevolent aspirations are

inaugurating co-operative colonies or works. One such is the Credit Foncier of Sinaloa, a colony established in Mexico on co-operative principles, having excellent privileges from the Mexican Government. The colonists own the land, railroads and industries in common. All public property is so held, but the home is a private institution. The colony is governed by a body of elected Directors. The women vote equally with the men. No corporate churches are allowed; each man is free to worship as he may please in his own home. No intoxicating drinks are made or sold; no gambling or other houses of ill-repute allowed within the colony precincts. All persons are employed by the colony itself; labour is interchanged, and the net gain is divided among colonists according to their shares of stock. This is, perhaps, the largest co-operative venture ever made, and has unprecedented advantages of harbour, situation and climate; but, above all, its ethical principles are integral and vital. At one time a colonist wrote on behalf of a 'betrayed and deserted woman, against whom the doors of our civilization were closed, when she tried to return to the path of moral duty. The directors promptly responded by the gift of a share of stock and the assurance that all who endeavoured to live honestly and in a spirit of true fraternity were welcome to Sinaloa whatever might be the mistakes of their past. No more Theosophical deed than this is known to me. It would seem as if colonies founded upon a more liberal and just division of labour and profit, upon a more enlightened system of interchange and inter-dependence, would tend to facilitate the advance of the race. All persons may not be able to join them, but they can help them. Clubs are already founded to assist co-operation, and such might be started in Branches interested in seeing justice established as the regulator of human institutions. It is not division of property that the honest man wants, but a division of labour and profits other than that awarded by a system which regards money as the chief factor of prosperity, and energy—the great life force—as its underling and slave. While I am well aware that physical energy is but one division of that life force, as regards the value of such energy and that expended for the amassing of personal wealth and for personal and selfish indulgences, I submit that the former is far higher than the latter and should not be underpaid. *The motive determines the value and quality of energy as well as the plane on which it operates.* That other Theosophists think with me is proved by the interest of others in co-operative principles, while the fact that these principles, and the life they give rise to, lead thoughtful minds into a more distinctly Theosophical line of thought, is evidenced by two directors and some members of the above-mentioned colony having joined the T. S. Godin, the great co-operator of Guise, also became a Theosophist.

These are some of the opportunities of work which present themselves, and which may be carried on at the same time with that inward work of self-conquest and self-purification undertaken in the silence of the heart by all true students. I would urge that this subject of Theosophical work be held under special consideration at our next annual convention. The time has come for us to make good our pledge; to ask ourselves whether we shall be a Brotherhood in every vital sense, a working army united by a harmonious, charitable, unprejudiced spirit of sympathy and love, or a mere formal organization interested in intellectual pursuits. Let each one of us ask himself this question, and ask until he finds the answer: Am I working to the full extent of my powers and in every possible direction for that Universal Brotherhood to which I am pledged, and in whose future realization I implicitly believe—witness my "word of honour"? Else honour, loyalty, and Brotherhood are empty echoes of an idle and fantastic dream.

J. CAMPBELL VER PLANCK, F.T.S.

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# LONELY MUSINGS.

From "THE THEOSOPHIST," December, 1885.

THOU that art directing thy will to the attainment of perfection—thou that wilt be content with nothing short of the highest, hearken to a description of the road thou must travel.

Think not that thou shalt attain in a day the power even to recognise the illusions of sense for what they are. Many a time shalt thou sink and wallow in the mire, but at each withdrawal it shall seem to thee more hateful than before, and if only thy will be directed aright the God in thee will not long leave thee wandering. And think not that thy road will be a pleasant one. After some few gleams of brightness to refresh thee, it will lead through the torture-chamber, and when thou art led there thou needest not to stir a finger, for all shall be done for thee, and thy soul shall endure searching torture, and of thy loftiest thoughts and most impassioned dreams shall be formed the rack on which thou shalt be stretched.

Nor when one fancy is over and the cords are loosened, imagine that thou art then to be released. Thou mayest spend many years—perchance even thy whole life—in this chamber, and again and again shalt thou be

stretched on the rack so soon as thou art able to bear it. And happy is it for thee if between the pangs thou dost not fall away from this high calling—weaving again entanglements of the senses—for then thou dost but repeat the previous torment and dost not advance to the more subtle tortures that await the spirit. But if there be no falling away, then are the intervals filled with a peace and bliss which is a foretaste of the joys beyond, and the soul like one escaped from a dark dungeon revels in the light of day.

To use an apt simile given by St. John of the Cross, this purgative affliction—this subtle torture—is the effect of the divine light on the soul that is being purified, and is analogous to the action of fire on fuel. "For the first action of material fire on fuel is to dry it, to expel from it all water and all moisture. It then blackens it and soils it, and drying it by little and little, makes it light, and consumes away its accidental defilements which are contrary to itself. Finally, having heated and set on fire its outward surface, it transforms the whole into itself, and makes it beautiful as itself. Thus fuel subject to the action of fire retains neither active nor passive qualities of its own except bulk and specific weight, and assumes all the qualities of fire. It becomes dry, then it glows, and glowing, burns; luminous, it gives light, and burns much brighter than before. All this is the action of fire."

Thus in the secret chamber of affliction and divine contemplation is the soul consumed away and transformed, though few there are who in a single incarnation are strong enough to endure the complete purging. But blessed are they who are found worthy even partially to undergo this suffering. "Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth."

One of the first great griefs of this dark night of the soul, which may be compared to the drying of the fuel under the action of the fire, is that thou art no longer able to love or admire any of thy former friends, who nevertheless remain well worthy of thy love and admiration; nor canst thou any longer take joy in any earthly thing, however innocent, for everything within thee seems to be blasted into aridity, and except for the latent knowledge that thou art set towards the highest, thou feelest as if thy whole life were turned into pain. But this also ought to be a help in thy passage through the dark night, for if thou seest nothing worthy around thee, then shouldst thou the more strenuously set thy soul towards that ideal beauty—that divine wisdom and goodness which already is thy lode-star.

And the passion that was in thee—the unsatisfied desire that was like a serpent gnawing at thy heart,—shall now be re-directed. Thou art now

set to lift the veil of Isis—not that of any mortal maiden—and thy one and only aim shall henceforth be—call it by what name thou wilt—the mystical marriage of the Hierophant, the at-one-ment of the seven principles of man, the union of the soul with God.

No longer with high-drawn sentimental feelings, no longer with hysterical sobbings, shall the spirit make its presence known, but with a face hard set amidst a world of practical men, thou bearest now within thee the hidden life of which the world knows not, but which is now to thee the only life worth living; and as all strong emotion has come to thee not as a binding but as a loosening from the chains of sense, so the thoughts of earthly society and companionship that were so sweet are now merged in the desire to be at one with the life of the whole world, in the intense longing that the thought and aspiration of all Humanity should become the very pulsations of thy being.

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# TO THEOSOPHISTS.

In all our great cities large numbers of the men and women whom we call Brothers and Sisters are working for wages barely sufficient to support life. No individual effort can touch the mass of these, but it is possible to alleviate the lot of some of them, those especially who supply the community with clothing. Sweating—inseparable as it is from our present system—is carried to shocking lengths in the tailoring and ready-made underlinen and dress trades, and here it is specially vulnerable to attack by those who purchase the goods. All that is needed is that the conscience shall be educated to recognise its social obligations, and that men and women shall realise that they are personally guilty of the crime of sweating the poor when they buy cheap goods without ascertaining whether the producers of those goods are paid fair living-wages for their work. If the fair-dealing firms alone were supported by conscientious people, they would gradually be enabled to employ more and more of the men and women in the trade, while their sweating competitors would find themselves deserted by their customers, and would be forced to mend their ways. It is the clear duty of Theosophists, if their profession of Brotherhood be honest, to ascertain whether the middlemen with whom they deal are free from the stain of the worst kind of sweating. It must be added that the mere payment of a high price by the purchaser does not ensure the payment of decent wages to the workman or workwoman; this must be ascertained by inquiry, and this inquiry the Theosophist is bound to make.

Miss Clementina Black has published a partial list of fair firms, and any Theosophist will be safe in purchasing goods at any of the below-named firms:—

List of some dressmakers in Bond Street, Regent Street, and Oxford Street, who pay their out-of-door dressmakers, being "full hands," not less than sixteen shillings. It is not pretended that this list is at all complete. Moreover, some of these firms give out some of their work, and where this is done the price paid to the real worker may be diminished by the profits of an uncertain number of middlemen:—

Redmayne and Co., 19 and 20, New Bond Street.
Metcalf, 111, New Bond Street.
Nicoll, 171, New Bond Street.
Howell and James, 5, 7, 9, Regent Street.

Swan and Edgar, 39—41, Regent Street.
Lewis and Allenby, 193, 195, Regent Street.
Jay and Co., 243—253, Regent Street.
Mdme. Elise, 170, Regent Street.
Dickens and Jones, 232—234, Regent Street.
Allison, 238—242, Regent Street.
Hamilton and Co., 326, Regent Street.
Little and Son, 94—98, Oxford Street.
Hayward and Co., 166, Oxford Street.
Marshall and Snelgrove, Oxford Street.
(This last firm puts out work.)

2.—MILLINERS IN LIKE CASE.

Michel, 196, Oxford Street.
Brandon and Co., 304, 306, Oxford Street.
James and Cubison, 188, Oxford Street.
Mdme. Jeannette, 305, Regent Street.
Mrs. Ritchie, 293, Regent Street.
Mrs. P. Smyth, 276, Regent Street.
Tofield, 179, New Bond Street.

Mdme. Isabel, 90, New Bond Street, employs only indoor hands, but at a price which would place her name on this list even if they were outdoor hands.

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3.—List of shirtmaking establishments where the work is done on the premises, and where the pay (piecework), is such that in an ordinary year a competent workwoman may earn from ten to twenty shillings a week :—

Mrs. Allison, 34 and 35, Brook Street, Holborn.
Beale and Inman, 26, Marylebone Lane.
Hamilton and Co., 326, Regent Street.
Leith and Co., 302, Holborn.
Lord, 48, Conduit Street.
Ludlam, 174, Piccadilly.
Sampson, 268, Oxford Street.
WHOLESALE.—Stapley and Smith, 128, London Wall.

4.—Firms of upholsterers who are considered by men to pay them fairly, and who pay to women (other than apprentices or girls) not less than fifteen shillings a week :—

Atkinson and Co., 198, Westminster Bridge Road.
Arthur, 18, Motcombe Street, Pimlico.
Blyth, 4 and 5, Chiswell Street, E.C.
Bertram, 100, Dean Street, Soho.
Collinson and Lock, 76—80, Oxford Street.
Cowtan and Son, 309, Oxford Street.
H. and J. Cooper, 8 and 9, Great Pulteney Street.
Crace, 36, Wigmore Street.
Edwards and Roberts, 146, Wardour Street.
Felix and Wayman, 14, Soho Street, Soho Square.
Gregory and Co., 212, Regent Street.
Hampton and Son, 2, Pall Mall East.
Hindley and Son, 290, Oxford Street.
Holland and Sons, 23, Mount Street, Grosvenor Square.
Jenks and Wood, 65, Holborn Viaduct.
Jetty, 8, North Audley Street.
Johnstone and Norman, 67, New Bond Street.
Liberty, 140, Regent Street.
Lapworth, 22, Old Bond Street.
Marshall and Snellgrove, 334, Oxford Street.
Mellier, 48, Margaret Street, Oxford Street.
W. Morris and Co., 449, Oxford Street.
Morant, Boyd, and Blandford, 91, New Bond Street.
Nosotti, 93, Oxford Street.
W. A. and S Smee, 87, Finsbury Pavement
Trollope and Son, Halkin Street West, Pimlico.
Wilkinson, 8, Old Bond Street.

At Tarn's, in Newington Causeway, women are paid at this rate; but the pay of the men is not known to me.

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# WHAT THEOSOPHY AND ITS SOCIETY SHOULD BE.

## LEAVES FROM OCCULT PHILOSOPHY.

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THE

# NECESSITY FOR REINCARNATION.

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1889.

# WHAT THEOSOPHY AND ITS SOCIETY SHOULD BE.

THE letter from which the following pages are translated—and which was never meant for publication—was recently addressed to one of the Editors by Madame Camille Lemaître, the friend of our late and regretted brother Louis Dramard, and a most worthy member of the T. S. in France. The tone and spirit of the writer's remarks are so eminently noble, theosophical, and altruistic, and the suggestions made so desirable, that permission has been obtained from the lady for their translation and publication. It is hoped that the seed thus sown will bear fruit in the minds of our readers.—H. P. B.

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As regards the theosophical movement in France, about which you ask my opinion, Dramard and myself shared precisely the same ideas. In our view the T. S. is too fine and delicate a plant to live and thrive in the surroundings among which it was first planted. Flourishing in all its glory and bearing fruit in its strength upon the highest tablelands of the earth, its birth-place, it neither can nor ever could take root in the strong soil of plains fattened and watered with the sweat of the poor, or on those sterile tufa rocks called respectively the *bourgeoisie*, or middle-class, and an aristocracy more or less learned or ignorant, lazy or active; just as it could only fade and wither in the hot-house drawing-rooms and boudoirs, where women of the world, gay, foolish, capricious, see in it only an exotic novelty of a special kind.

This plant of life needs pure air, blazing sunshine and fresh dews. It is only in the heart of a man purified by suffering, by the daily battle for life; it is in the heart of him who has begun to pay his debt to Karma by the unheard-of sufferings which our civilization of steel and iron, with its sham airs of equality and philanthropy, imposes on the disinherited of life; it is in the heart of him who, in spite of the difficulties of all kinds amidst which he struggles, thinks more of others than of himself, forgetting self in the thought of those who suffer more than he does—it is in such hearts, I say, that the divine plant can find the elements needed for its first development.

That plant can indeed never take root among us, nor doubtless elsewhere, unless it finds congenial soil where men desire to know and to learn from pure love of the truth and not of the honour, the glory, the riches which its truths can bring them. And however astonishing it may seem to many at first sight, that soil exists in the people and in the

French people—I answer for it! I do not speak thus in a narrow national spirit; by temperament I have no country, no family, and I strive daily to have no "self." Father, mother, husband, all disappear before the great questions of general welfare. An integral part of the great whole, my centre, like its centre, is everywhere in the thought of my future harmonious unity. For the moment, I must act in one small special corner of the earth, whither in the course of my evolution my previous affinities have brought me. I speak of this little corner, simply because I know it best.

"The French nation is frivolous," say of it the other nations. Well, yes, it is frivolous! It forgets from one day to the next its injuries and insults. Under the influence of one kind word it puts itself back entirely into the hands of its most terrible enemy, and allows itself to be deceived like a baby. Yes, it is frivolous, for to obtain for its dear ones, for its neighbours, for all, the smallest liberty of action and thought, it goes to meet death—singing.

The proof of what I thus assert is to be found in its love for the *révolution bourgeoise* of 1789. For what has that revolution done for the proletariat, for the penniless, for the daily labourer who possesses nothing whatsoever on the face of this our planet? Nothing, but to increase, by a violent transformation of social conditions, the intensity of his sufferings, of his physical and moral anxieties. The middle class ousted the aristocracy and took its place in the possession of honours, of fortune, in the guidance of the classes it exploits, with no other thought of the poor than to batten on their misery.

And yet the French masses actually worship "their revolution," and those who have defended its spirit. The poor owe nothing, absolutely nothing, to one or to the others on the plane of material gratification, for they are still more inexorably shorn and put to ransom than before; but they revere the one and the others because they know that they havegiven freedom to the spirit; and to a certain extent, liberty to thought. The revolution certainly did more in this direction than Luther's Reformation, which with us left the people mostly indifferent, as the Catholic Church, which is seldom mistaken in judging an enemy, well knows; and it considers the French Revolution as one of the hardest blows which have struck it since its establishment. It is right, for it is thanks to the breach openedin its ramparts by the light artillery of '89, that the T. S. can to-day penetrate to the very heart of the stronghold, and the Church feels that it is by the hand of that doctrine that it will irrevocably perish.

A people which thus raises itself unconsciously from off the material

plane, which it considers as nothing, to attach itself to the spirit, is it not ploughed and ready to receive the divine seed ?

Moreover, to accomplish anything lasting in Theosophy, one must leave the dead and dying, and those who slumber in the comfort of the flesh, gorged with material and intellectual riches, and who neither see, nor hear, nor understand, nor desire, nor do anything. We must address those who live, who think, who suffer, who aspire, who desire, who hunger physically, intellectually, morally, and even spiritually. We must go to the true (the poor) people.

But how is the true to be distinguished from the false, the good man from him who hides under a simple exterior the same gross needs, the same selfish desires, the same longings, the same brutality and cruelty as the satisfied, the possessors, those in power, and who, if to-morrow they held the place of these, would be the same oppressors of the feeble, as those they seek to overthrow to-day ?

In this difficulty we have only to imitate Nature; to cast myriads of seeds on the wind to obtain one plant. According to the ancient parable of esoteric wisdom, re-edited like so many other things by our relatively modern evangelists: "one-third will be trodden under foot, one-third will be eaten by the birds, and the third part will sprout and bear fruit an hundredfold."*

The Protestants imitated this example; they have cast the seed of their foolish ideas to the four corners of the earth, and have made the weeds of their folly and ineptness to spring up everywhere. You will say that the soil for such a harvest is not scarce. True; but it is also true that, in their hunger, many souls have thrown themselves upon this poor and insipid food, hoping it would give them strength, moral health, and spiritual life.

If to such are given true bread and a fish, instead of a serpent, to use the language of their New Testament, they will surely know how to

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* This is just the policy of the T. S. from its beginning. Its visible leaders are unable to always distinguish the good from the bad, to see still dormant evil in the hearts of those who apply to join our Society, and the *real* Founders—those behind the screen—will denounce or accuse no living man. *All are given a chance.* Gladly would our Society abolish even the small entrance fee, had it any funds, however small, to carry on the work which increases daily, and many branches have already done so. For several years no initiation fees were paid, but our scanty and even joint means were found insufficient to maintain the Headquarters, pay the stationery, and the ever-increasing postage, and feed and lodge all those who volunteered to work *gratis* for theosophy. Thus, the fees were re-established. Other Societies beg for, and are given, large sums of money, but the T S. never does. Nevertheless, the taunt that the Founders *sell Theosophy*, creating Theosophists *for* £1, or twenty shillings, a head, is being repeatedly thrust into our faces! And yet the poor are never made to pay anything at all. And if those who have the means will refuse to help to do good to the disinherited and the suffering, what are those who have given all they had, and have nothing now to give but their services, to do ?—H. P. B.

distinguish between them. If a real doctor, an expert in the healing art, is brought to them instead of a charlatan who adds to their sufferings, they will know how to leave one for the other.

Beauty is always beauty, justice always justice, truth will be ever truth. Every soul to which is shown the pure gold of truth will of itself turn away from the base imitation, from the false in religion: and the hollowness of many of our scientific data will be perceived by one who, in the eyes of the world, is the simplest and most ignorant of men.

Thus, in order to *naturalise* in France, and even anywhere, in Europe as in America, the divine plant of Theosophy, *we should sow broadcast the seed* of the Eastern esoteric teachings.

But how shall we sow the seed? How shall we bring within reach of the many, who have neither the means nor the leisure, these precious teachings? How? How? It is of the solution of this question only that I have been thinking, since I have had the happiness to find food to renew my life by their reception and assimilation.

The following was Dramard's idea: Form a closed nucleus of attraction, however small, of tried Theosophists, and accept *anyone* who, whether from idleness, from curiosity, or any other vain feeling, comes to ask anything. That which is of importance in this open group is to bring together the largest possible number of adherents, in view of their clubbing together as means for propagandising in the way we desire.*

This propaganda should not have for its objects to make Theosophists *à la lettre*, as, for instance, the Catholics seek to make Catholics, or people ready to declare themselves as such, but to spread effectively the Theosophical teachings, and to make their meaning reach those hearts which are ready to welcome it, and which it cannot reach from want of an inlet.

Dig canals through which a large part of what has for years past been filtering into the world from a sacred fountain can reach the fertile soil which is ready for it, a soil which is only waiting for such an irrigation to produce abundant harvests.

We must thus select among all that has been written since the foundation of the T. S., and without commentary or explanation of the why and wherefore, sow pamphlets broadcast, like the Biblical fanatics who thrust everywhere their little tracts, in which they beseech us to save our souls from Hell, to come to Jesus, to believe in Jesus, to fear a personal

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* We are glad, however, to hear on the testimony of our correspondent, and old and trusted friend of M. Louis Dramard, the late President of our T. S. in Paris, that such were his ideas, as we had been assured of the contrary. We may have something to say of this at some future time.—H. P. B.

devil cunning and wise, and a god no less personal, but more foolish and more ignorant than his devil.

And to think that for centuries past it is with such "rubbish" that men feed souls, and seek to edify human beings! Can one wonder at the moral and physical weakness of poor humanity?

Blessings be upon the beings who have worked for their own divinity, and praise be to those through whom they have sent to us their work; it is not the materials for edification that are wanting, but the means of turning them to account. At one with Dramard, my husband and I would have considered ourselves the greatest wretches and egoists on earth had we remained quietly contemplating the splendid treasure we held in our hands, without thinking of spreading it abroad and sharing it with others.

How then! Such a fortune in the hands of some thousands of Theosophists, and of these three-fourths are indifferent to the blessing granted to them, or think only how to profit by themselves. What! Of these only a few have air, light and food, while the masses beside them agonize in the shadow, and die of starvation on the spiritual plane! The matter is a grave one, and must have, for all of us, the most terrible consequences!

With our present social organizations, a man—ten men, die of hunger. That is a trifle, for which the law of retribution will exact payment from the organizers and leaders of men and society; but that does not prevent the globe rolling on. But what is of real serious importance and a hindrance to the march of evolution is that, through the faults of men calling themselves friends of humanity, *souls* should wither from want, and die of inanition.

Is it surprising that our world should advance so slowly? What numbers of motive powers are unused, what numbers of beneficent forces are left inactive from want of a fulcrum, from want of one true datum which could serve as the starting-point for a whole series of actions, which would strengthen the great movement of regeneration.

I repeatedly begged the "Isis Branch" to work in this direction, to print, for instance, the Abbé Roca's articles and your luminous and crushing replies. Nothing is better calculated to strike the mind of the French people, and to assist it to find its orientation, than the work you have there done.*

The same remark applies to the letter published in LUCIFER to the

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* Reference here is made to the late *Isis*, the Branch of the T. S. in Paris, and a controversy in the *Lotus* between the Abbé Roca and one of the Editors of LUCIFER.—H. P. B.

Primate of England; I should like to see it translated into all languages and distributed in millions in all Catholic and Protestant countries. The same, again, for *Theosophy or Jesuitism*, which I translated for the *Lotus*. How much good might already have been done. So little has "Isis" concerned itself with propaganda, that twice have the subscriptions sent by my husband and myself been returned to us (after Dramard's death ?). Thus, though the "Isis" cannot be accused of having done nothing and kept the money, yet the last thing its staff cared to do, was to spread Theosophy broadcast.

What numbers of things might be used for the masses! And always on our system of spreading on all sides the glad tidings, how much might be taken from *Esoteric Buddhism*, *Magic : White and Black*, etc., but the most fruitful source of all to draw from will be the *Secret Doctrine ;* yet for its spread, when translated, it is to be regretted that *Esoteric Buddhism* has not been published. For France, its translation would have aided the spread of the Theosophical movements far more than that of the *Occult World*. Such was Dramard's opinion.

*Esoteric Buddhism*, its completeness notwithstanding, gives a far better general idea of the Doctrine. All are of the same opinion. It is absolutely necessary for our country to prepare the way for the *Secret Doctrine*, which throws light on just those points which are left in the shadow by *Esoteric Buddhism*, and amplifies its explanations by the way in which it states the truth.

But to return to our idea of propaganda, which I want to explain to you thoroughly. For I feel disgusted when I see that the "Salvation Army" manages, penny by penny, to draw millions into its coffers, millions which it uses to distribute bad tea, rancid cakes, and poisonous doctrines, while sincere Theosophists cannot manage to quit their own narrow circle and spread far and wide the flood of saving truths, which they have received for some time past.

To accomplish anything, we must understand each other (and should that be so impossible among co-thinkers who preach only UNIVERSAL BROTHERHOOD ?), and each should give financially, intellectually, morally, and spiritually, according to his means. An annual subscription is a good thing, apart from the donations which those who are favoured by fortune can give; always on condition, however, that for their few pounds the latter do not imagine that they have the right to hamper everything by their narrow views, their timid spirit, and their pusillanimous character.

The poor man's farthing even is not to be disdained; on the contrary, a great step will be made when "the widow" will have understood that

she can do no more useful work for Humanity than to give her mite towards relieving the great burden of ignorance under which that poor humanity is dying, whether clad in silken vesture or in rags, marching under the banners of Religion, of Science, Politics, or Society.

I say all this to you, and you know it better than anyone since you are the mouth-piece of the Teachers who keep on repeating it in their letters and writings. And I only speak to you thus at length of this mode of organization, which belongs to the entirely practical domain, because such an organization tends to beget consequences on the "spiritual plane."

One word more on this subject. François de Sallès, terrified at the progress of the Reformation, was seeking every means to combat it. In his letters to the ecclesiastics and bishops among his friends, he used to say: "Let us write Catholic novels," and they wrote Catholic novels, and these novels were in everybody's hands. They never ceased appearing except during the First Republic. And after that had been crushed by Napoleon I. a revival of this kind of literature occurred, which became a regular avalanche after Napoleon III. had crushed, in his turn, the Second Republic. These books are everywhere to-day; in the libraries for children and women, they form the basis of the communal libraries, and are still given as prizes in the *Lycées* and other schools. Thus in spite of Voltaire and the freethinkers, or those who think themselves so, "François" always wins the battle and Catholicism still possesses, as in the past, the heart of the woman; through her it holds the child, and is master of the man, however emancipated he may fancy himself.

It is true that those who destroyed had nothing to put in its place; and the soul's aspirations are no empty word. "Give us our daily bread" is a prayer uttered with a constancy worthy of a better fate by these poor starving ones. "Give us our daily bread" cry in the desert of life those who know not that this bread cannot be given, but must be earned, and that it is in ourselves. "Give us our daily bread" is repeated on every note by poor humanity; some addressing themselves to the ministers of their religion, others to the leading lights of science; these to the philosophers, those to the politicians; these to the sociologists, who are no better off, those to any charlatan who claims *to know*.

And the wisdom of wisdoms, Theosophy, of whose existence all these needy ones are ignorant, answers to all desires and can fulfil all aspirations. It alone can restore strength, health, physical and moral peace to all these troubled, excited beings, exhausted by centuries of political, economic and religious despotisms. It alone can show to each man that he himself is the way, and that in himself alone are the truth and the life.

Let us then write Theosophical novels for the masses; *i.e.*, novels in which, leaving aside the transcendental part of Occultism, we seek only to express and to render intelligible by the action of the heroes, the lofty meaning of its saving morality, thus inculcating in men's hearts its all-embracing principles.

Let us write Theosophical novels, and if we know how, as Moleschott says, always to respect the law of cause and effect in the actions, the words, even the thoughts of the people we introduce, those novels will be interesting, as well as instructive. They will be read with pleasure by the men, whom they will please by their independent and manly tone; they will charm and move the women by the sentiments they express and by their healthy psychism; they will appeal to the children—by their simplicity, their straightforwardness, their truth.

What cannot be done in this direction with the help of the light which the esoteric doctrine throws upon man, the worlds, life, evolution in general? In the great humanitarian work, each has his lot. The task given to me, to my Highest Self, is to work thus—however difficult it may be. I throw my whole heart into it, knowing that all that a man wills that can he do.

A little will is my only possession; with this little I work ceaselessly to learn that I may be able to do. Able to do what? Able to start as many Egos as possible upon the path of the final spiritual growth. By this reckoning, all healthy books, which quicken the good feelings in man, or which assist their development, are books written to this end, whether intentionally or not. Tolstoi's Socialistic novels, for instance, are thus Theosophical novels; the presence or absence of the word itself making no difference.

I see in the October number of LUCIFER, that some members of the T. S. are possessed with the desire to form "Lodges of Magic." Poor things! What are they thinking of? they are but wasting their time. If they are tormented by the desire to progress on the spiritual plane, let them first work at rendering healthy the physical and moral atmosphere in which they live, so as to develop some spiritual faculties. To that end, let them enlighten the whole, let them employ their strength, their intelligence, their need of activity, *their money*, in pushing a propaganda such as I propose. They ought to have the means, these people whom the *devil tempts* by suggesting to them thus to throw themselves haphazard, without training, without preparation, into a path so dangerous, so little trodden; and surely the daily struggle for a livelihood must be unknown to them. If they have leisure, let them help to teach those who have none. It will be the first step on the road of Initiation.

Adeptship, *i.e.*, knowledge, and the power it gives, is what turns the heads of weak mortals and keeps them back from the goal for long; since, in their haste, full of covetousness and egoism, they completely lose their way.

For this reason, in such novels as I suggest, it is not the Adept in his power and glory whom I would see represented, but the Adept unconscious even of being so, in course of preparation, the Adept, who *will* be, in his toilsome, difficult, impossible, unceasing struggle against himself, against all the evil and opposing wills, against all the elements—in one word, against all the previous causes whose effects he has to destroy by labours of which those of Hercules are only a pale symbol, it is this Adept whom I would have shown in every phase of his arduous ascent, so as to fire men's souls and raise their courage.

What is true, is touching, and the Initiate, the Adept, is no myth. The Mahatma is. Edgard Quinet, in his splendid book, "Creation," wherein he thinks and has the intuition of so many truths about evolution, states the fact as a self-evident truth, when he says:—"A soul which holds straight on to the highest point of human nature is upon the plane of universal nature; it finds the truths upon which the world rests. Before experience has torn them from him, Nature confides her secrets to the great and good man."

Let the Theosophists who want to found a lodge of Magic meditate upon these words; let them make themselves able to *find* the truths upon which the world is based, and there will be no further danger for them in gratifying their desire. . . .

CAMILLE LEMAÎTRE.

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# LEAVES FROM OCCULT PHILOSOPHY.

FAIR the Karma of those living in the present. Thirsting for knowledge, they may be satisfied. Bright rays of light kindled by the hand of the "master" have recently been thrown on the dark enigmas of Life. The fragments of Occult lore here presented have been culled from that storehouse of "Ancient Wisdom," the "Secret Doctrine," and should perusal induce any reader desirous of greater knowledge to study at the fountain head, the object of the writer of these leaves will be fully attained. Let us see, then, what lessons for the conduct of life a slight sketch of esoteric history, and a few of the leading doctrines of Occultism, can furnish those who desire for a guide the pole star of Truth.

For the benefit of those readers who have little or no acquaintance with Theosophical teachings, we must first state—That on this planet, during this portion of the great evolutionary cycle, through which all things must pass on their journey from the One to the One, four great root races of human kind have come and gone with their numerous branches and sub-branches. It will be advisable, however, to pass over the first two root races, as they were not composed of physical men, but of astral shadows. We of this age are undoubtedly too material, in more senses than one, to take much interest in such beings. Let us commence, then, with the Third Root Race. Each great race lives on a continent, with whose destiny its own fate is closely entwined. The abode of the one just named has been called Lemuria, although, be it remembered, neither this nor the name given to the succeeding continent are the correct archaic terms. Lemuria extended from the foot of the Himalayas, southwards, to within a few degrees of the Antarctic Circle, embracing Australia and Tasmania (then inland regions) east and west as far as where the two Americas now lie, including, also, parts of Scandanavia. Thus this huge continent once reigned supreme on the sites of the Indian, Pacific, and Atlantic oceans, afterwards breaking up into several huge islands. It came into existence in the Secondary period, and was destroyed about 700,000 years before the beginning of the Tertiary, by means of volcanic fire. The early sub-races inhabiting Lemuria had no solid physical forms, neither were they differentiated into sexes. These changes, however, took place long before the end of their life cycle. From causes which we need not here dwell upon, the Lemurian race gradually degenerated in stature from 120 feet to a height of 60 feet, at time of separation into sexes, finally being about 25 feet at time of destruction. During the Lemurian period, the incidents, called the "sins of the mindless man," took place. For this Root Race was divided into three distinct classes, corresponding to separate points reached by each, in the cycle of mental evolution. The lowest, called the "mindless," by connection with huge she animals, bred a race of dumb, red-hair covered monsters, going on all fours. The causes of these degrading events are fully described in the "Secret Doctrine." A portion, however, of the Lemurians attained a high degree of civilization, developing a considerable amount of intellectuality during their life cycle. They built huge cities. Of rare earths and metals they built. They cut their own images, in their size and likeness, and worshipped them.* Nearly 8,000,000 years ago, they sank to their doom, and the great race of Atlanteans then occupied the scene. For as one

* Book of Dzyan

great continent is destroyed another rises from the ocean floors, and forms eventually the home of the succeeding race. The land of Atlantis was of vast extent also, covering the present site of the Atlantic Ocean, including besides portions of Europe and East Africa. Its geological history may be briefly presented as follows. Coming into existence 700,000 years before the Tertiary period, the main continent perished over 4,000,000 years afterwards, in the great deluge of the Mid-Miocene age. But the islands of Ruta and Daitya, belonging to Atlantis, were destroyed 850,000 years ago, whilst Plato's Atlantis, or Poseidoni's isle, sank 12,000 years only from now. The Fourth Root-Race, called Atlanteans, was composed, says the "Secret Doctrine," of several distinct humanities, and an almost countless number of races and nations. There were brown, yellow, white, and black giants and dwarfs amongst them.

The Atlantean age is of absorbing interest to anthropologists on account of the ape origin question being solved by the "Secret Doctrine" during its treatment of that period. We learn that apes are the offspring of Lemuro-Atlantean bestiality, consorting as they did with females of *semi-human* kind, producing thus the ancestors of modern anthropoid apes. The relations, thefore, according to Occultism, existing between the human species and apes are the reverse of those imagined by a great modern school of evolutionists. The Atlantean races, however, included extremes. If some were bestial in their habits, others attained a high degree of civilization, cultivating all the arts and sciences now known to us of the Fifth Race, and others remaining unknown in this age. *Rediscovery* of the latter will be the work of the future. For instance, amongst other extraordinary achievements, the Atlanteans accomplished the arts of aeronautic navigation, and of so polarizing iron that they could not be killed or wounded by weapons made of this metal. In religious matters they were themselves polarized in two opposing sections—one, with a lofty spiritual faith; the other, idolators, and offering homage to the Spirits of the Earth. The war which ensued between the "White Adepts" and the "wicked sorcerers" culminated in the destruction of the latter.

This, and much more, does Esoteric History tell us of the Great Root Races passed and gone; neither is it silent about the future. We are now in the Fifth Root Race, its fifth sub-race is accomplishing its cycle, and in due time the Sixth will appear and inhabit the new continent, destined for its reception.

The lessons Aryans may now learn from the Occult chronicles, are neither few nor unimportant. We see each great root race of the past, with

all its branches and sub-branches, passing through periods including in their scope all the vicissitudes of life. So must it be in the future, conforming to the Esoteric Doctrine which says, "The Ego must taste of all experience during its cycle, in order to fit itself for existence hereafter on a higher plane." Occultism, moreover, affirms that the great race destroying cataclysms we have noted are precipitated by the descent into animality and crime of human kind. Hence it is evident that man has it in his power, by befouling his moral atmosphere, to seriously and adversely affect the physical plane of existence. As an Occultist has well said, "the evil imaginations of men corrupt the imagination of nature." Each one, then, has a choice. To listen to the animal desires powerful to lead astray. For

> Kama it is!
> Passion it is! born of the Darknesses,
> Which pusheth him, mighty of appetite,
> Sinful and strong is this—man's enemy.
>
> —"*Bhagavad-Gitâ.*"

Remaining thus enchained by gross matter, dragged down to lower planes, until with vast suffering, the lesson of life is learnt. Or hearkening well to the voice of the Higher Self, spurning with disdain all material clogs, toil strenuously aloft the path to Man's great heritage.

In every age, the great "Leaders of the World" have striven to guide our steps aright. They call and beckon us now. Shall we heed? Let the cycles pass on. The future alone can show.

The great keystone doctrine of Occultism, viz., Karma and Reincarnation, only lightly touched on in connection with esoteric human history, may now be considered in another aspect. It is the pride and boast of thinkers and workers of the modern evolutionary school of philosophy, that they have succeeded in demonstrating the inviolable supremacy of Law in every department of Nature. It requires, however, very little courage to assert, as we now do, that all efforts to elaborate a perfect system of Moral Law, acting entirely on this plane, have failed. All systems of philosophy are here at fault. Useless is it to say, "Inquiry will result in the conviction that the moral sense is not ultimate, but derivative, and that it has been built up out of slowly organized experiences of pleasures and pains."* According to this view the human races of the past have suffered and endured that we of the present might know good from evil. They were sacrificed, in short, that we might be blessed.

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* "Cosmic Philosophy," vol. ii., p. 321.

The idea is so revolting to ordinary conceptions of justice, that it stands condemned at first sight. This system, however, is the best that moralists can construct on a material footing apart from the Occult doctrine. It is but reasonable to conclude, therefore, that unless the latter is admitted as a base, one wing, and that the most important one of the magnificent structure erected by the genius of modern thinkers, must remain uncompleted, an eyesore, to mar the whole.

If, however, the Law of Karma and Reincarnation is accepted, a complete and scientific system of morals stands revealed. The vast edifice is complete. The task finished. Bearing these considerations in view, it would not be surprising to see in the immediate future recognition of these facts on the part of the fine intellects which compose the evolutionary school of philosophy.

Members of the many Christian sects doubtless object to the Occult doctrine, on grounds connected with their own theological conceptions of the matter. To such we can merely reply now, that as Geo. Coombe long ago remarked in his "Constitution of Man," that if Divine Providence cannot be shown to be just in this world, there is no reason for expecting justice from it in any other. It is just because the Law of Karma and Reincarnation does show inflexible justice meted out to all on *this plane*, that Occultists can so confidently put it forward as a complete solution to the darkest Enigmas of Life. The reign of the Perfect Law, moreover, allows full and free play for the free will of Man. Thus it acts in contradistinction to the views of Life held by some eminent materialists, who are of opinion that all animals, including the human species, are merely automata. But in accordance with the ideas of every Christian sect, except one. Every Occultist, of course, recognizes the difficulty any new doctrine, however reasonable in itself, must encounter for a long time in making headway. The esoteric system, however, has on its side a spirit of devotion, immense sacrifices, greater than aught else in our day can show.

These heroic efforts cannot, will not, fail. They are backed up by mighty influences working on higher planes than this. For the Theosophical Society is not an ordinary body of persons bound together for commonplace objects. Far from it. A great French scholar has declared Theosophy the third great movement of the world. Let all, then, joined in this great enterprise, constantly remember the end to be attained. And if, perchance, some, appalled by the gigantic obstacles in our path, feel at times disposed to falter by the way, such should then remember those "Great Souls" who never hesitate or leave their watch.

And, gaining this fresh strength of heart, turn anew to help "the few strong hands who uphold the heavy Karma of the world." Many besides there are, in this age, storm-tossed upon the sea of doubt, weary of the strife of warring creeds, who yet hesitate for reasons easy to be understood to join the Cause. To such, let Krishna's words appeal—

He that, being self contained, hath vanquished doubt,
Disparting self from service, soul from works
Enlightened and emancipate, my Prince
Works fetter him no more. Cut them atwain
With sword of wisdom, Son of Bharata!
This doubt that binds thy heart-beats! cleave the bond
Born of thy ignorance! Be bold and wise!
Give thyself to the field with me! Arise!

E. ADAMS, F.T.S.

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# THE NECESSITY FOR REINCARNATION.

To most persons not already Theosophists, no doctrine appears more singular than that of Reincarnation, *i.e.*, that each man is repeatedly born into earth-life; for the usual belief is that we are here but once, and once for all determine our future. And yet it is abundantly clear that one life, even if prolonged, is no more adequate to gain knowledge, acquire experience, solidify principle, and form character, than would one day in infancy be adequate to fit for the duties of mature manhood. Any man can make this even clearer by estimating, on the one hand, the probable future which Nature contemplates for humanity, and, on the other, his present preparation for it. That future includes evidently two things—an elevation of the individual to god-like excellence, and his gradual apprehension of the Universe of Truth. His present preparation, therefore, consists of a very imperfect knowledge of a very small department of one form of existence, and that mainly gained through the partial use of misleading senses; of a suspicion, rather than a belief, that the sphere of super-sensuous truth may exceed the sensuous as the great universe does this earth; of a partially-developed set of moral and spiritual faculties, none acute and none unhampered, but all dwarfed by non-use, poisoned by prejudice, and perverted by ignorance; the whole nature, moreover, being limited in its interests and affected in its endeavour by the ever-present needs of a physical body which, much more than the soul, is felt to be the real "I."

Is such a being, narrow, biassed, carnal, sickly, fitted to enter at death on a limitless career of spiritual acquisition?

Now, there are only three ways in which this obvious unfitness may be overcome—a transforming power in death, a post-mortem and wholly spiritual discipline, a series of re-incarnations. There is evidently nothing in the mere separation of soul from body to confer wisdom, ennoble character, or cancel dispositions acquired through fleshliness. If any such power resided in death, all souls, upon being disembodied, would be precisely alike—a palpable absurdity. Nor could a post-mortem discipline meet the requirement, and this for nine reasons: (*a*) the soul's knowledge of human life would always remain insignificant; (*b*) of the various faculties only to be developed during incarnation, some would still be dormant at death, and therefore never evolve; *(c)* the unsatisfying nature of material life would not have been fully demonstrated; *(d)* there would have been no deliberate conquest of the flesh by the spirit; *(e)* the meaning of Universal Brotherhood would have been very imperfectly seen; *(f)* desire for a career on earth under different conditions would persistently check the disciplinary progress; *(g)* exact justice could hardly be secured; *(h)* the discipline itself would be insufficiently varied and copious; *(i)* there would be no advance in the successive races on earth.

There remains, then, the last alternative, a series of reincarnations—in other words, that the enduring principle of the man, endowed during each interval between two earth-lives with the results achieved in the former of them, shall return for further experience and effort. If the nine needs unmet by a merely spiritual discipline after death are met by re-incarnation, there is a surely strong presumption of its actuality.

Now, *(a) Only through reincarnations can knowledge of human life be made exhaustive.* A perfected man must have experienced every type of earthly relation and duty, every phase of desire, affection, and passion, every form of temptation, and every variety of conflict. No one life can possibly furnish the material for more than a minute section of such experience.

(*b*) *Reincarnations give occasion for the development of all those faculties which can only be developed during incarnation.* Apart from any questions raised by Occult doctrine, we can readily see that some of the richest soul-acquirements come only through contact with human relations and through suffering from ills. Of these, sympathy, toleration, patience, energy, fortitude, foresight, gratitude, pity, beneficence, and altruism are examples.

(*c*) *Only through re-incarnations is the unsatisfying nature of material life fully demonstrated.* One incarnation proves merely the futility of its own

conditions to secure happiness. To force home the truth that all are equally so, all must be tried. In time the soul sees that a spiritual being cannot be nourished on inferior food, and that any joy short of union with the Divine must be illusionary.

(*d*) *The subordination of the Lower to the Higher nature is made possible by many earth-lives.* Not a few are needed to convince that the body is but a case, and not a constituent, of the real Ego; others, that it and its passions must be controlled by that Ego. Until the spirit has full sway over the flesh, the man is unfit for a purely spiritual existence. We have known no one to achieve such a victory during this life, and are therefore sure that other lives need to supplement it.

(*e*) *The meaning of Universal Brotherhood becomes apparent only as the veil of self and selfish interest thins*, and this it does only through that slow emancipation from conventional beliefs, personal errors, and contracted views which a series of reincarnations effects. A deep sense of human solidarity presupposes a fusion of the one in the whole—a process extending over many lives.

(*f*) *Desire for other forms of earthly experience can only be extinguished by undergoing them.* It is obvious that any one of us, if not translated to the unseen world, would feel regret that he had not tasted existence in some other situation or surroundings. He would wish to have known what it was to possess rank or wealth or beauty, or to live in a different race or climate, or to see more of the world and society. No spiritual ascent could progress while earthly longings were dragging back the soul, and so it frees itself from them by successively securing and dropping them. When the round of such knowledge has been traversed, regret for ignorance has died out.

(*g*) *Reincarnations give scope for exact justice to every man.* True awards must be given largely on the plane whereon they have been incurred, else their nature is changed, their effects are impaired, and their collateral bearings lost. Physical outrage has to be checked by the infliction of physical pain, and not merely by the arousing of internal regret. Honest lives find appropriate consequence in visible honour. But one career is too short for the precise balancing of accounts, and many are needed that every good or evil done in each may be requited on the earth where it took place.

(*h*) *Reincarnations secure variety and copiousness to the discipline we all require.* Very much of this discipline comes through the senses, through the conditions of physical life, and through psycho-physiological processes —all of which would be absent from a post-mortem state. Considered as

training or as penal infliction for wrong done, a repeated return to earth is needful for fulness of discipline.

(*i*) *Reincarnations ensure a continuous advance in the successive races of men.* If each new-born child was a new soul-creation, there would be, except through heredity, no general human advance. But if such child is the flower of many incarnations, he expresses an achieved past as well as a possible future. The tide of life thus rises to greater heights, each wave mounting higher upon the shore. The grand evolution of richer types exacts profusion of earth-existences for its success.

These points illustrate the universal maxim that "Nature does nothing by leaps." She does not, in this case, introduce into a region of spirit and spiritual life a being who has known little else than matter and material life, with small comprehension even of that. To do so would be analogous to transferring suddenly a ploughboy into a company of metaphysicians. The pursuit of any topic implies some preliminary acquaintance with its nature, aims, and mental requirements; and the more elevated the topic the more copious the preparation for it. It is inevitable that a being who has before him an eternity of progress through zones of knowledge and spiritual experience ever nearing the central Sun, should be fitted for it through long acquisition of the faculties which alone can deal with it. Their delicacy, their vigour, their penetrativeness, their unlikeness to those called for on the material plane, show the contrast of the earth-life to the spirit-life. And they show, too, the inconceivability of a sudden transition from one to the other, of a policy unknown in any other department of Nature's workings, of a break in the law of uplifting through Evolution. A man, before he can become a "god," must first become a perfect man; and he can become a perfect man neither in seventy years of life on earth, nor in any number of years of life from which human conditions are absent.

The production of a pure, rich, ethereal nature through a long course of spiritualizing influence during material surroundings is illustrated in agriculture by the cotton plant. When the time arrives that it can bear, the various vitalities of sun and air and ground and stalk culminate in a bud which bursts apart and liberates the ball within. That white, fleecy, delicate mass is the outcome of years of adhesion to the soil. But the sunlight and the rain from heaven have transformed heavy particles into the light fabric of the boll. And so man, long rooted in the clay, is bathed with influences from above, which, as they gradually pervade and elevate him, transmute every grosser element to its spiritual equivalent, purge and

purify and ennoble him, and, when the evolutionary process is complete, remove the last envelope from the perfected soul, and leave it free to pass for ever from its union with the material.

It is abundantly true that "except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." Re-birth and re-life must go on till their purposes are accomplished. If, indeed, we were mere victims of an evolutionary law, helpless atoms on whom the machinery of Nature pitilessly played, the prospect of a succession of incarnations, no one of which gave satisfaction, might drive to mad despair. But Theosophy thrusts on us no such cheerless exposition. It shows that re-incarnations are the law for man because they are the condition of his progress, which is also a law, but tells him that he may mould them and better them and lessen them. He cannot rid himself of the machinery, but neither should he wish to. Endowed with the power to guide it for the best, prompted with the motive to use that power, he may harmonize both his aspirations and his efforts with the system that expresses the infinite wisdom of the Supreme, and through the journey from the temporal to the eternal tread the way with steady feet, braced with the consciousness that he is one of an innumerable multitude, and with the certainty that he and they alike, if they so will it, may attain finally to that sphere where birth and death are but memories of the past.

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# A SKETCH OF THE THEOSOPHIC ORGANIZATION.

*Compiled from the "Theosophist" and Official Reports.*

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# A SKETCH OF THE THEOSOPHIC ORGANIZATION.

*Compiled from the "Theosophist" and Official Reports.*

IN Sept., 1875, a New York journal published the following notice:

"One movement of great importance has just been inaugurated in New York, under the lead of Col. Henry S. Olcott, in the organization of a society to be known as the Theosophical Society. The suggestion was entirely unpremeditated, and was made on the evening of the 7th Sept., in the parlours of Madame Blavatsky, where a company of seventeen ladies and gentlemen had assembled to meet Mr. Geo. H. Felt, whose discovery of the geometrical figures of the Egyptian Cabala may be regarded as among the most surprising feats of the human intellect. The company included several persons of great learning, and some of wide personal influence. The managing editors of two religious papers; the co-editors of two literary magazines; an Oxford LL.D.; a venerable Jewish scholar and traveller of repute; an editorial writer of a New York morning paper; the President of the New York Society of Spiritualists; Mr. C. C. Massey of England; Mrs. Emma Hardinge Britten and Dr. Britten; two New York lawyers besides Col. Olcott; a partner of a Philadelphia publishing house; a well-known physician; and, most notable of all, Madame Blavatsky herself comprised Mr. Felt's audience.

"After his discourse an animated discussion ensued. Col. Olcott briefly sketched the present condition of the spiritualistic movement, the attitude of its antagonists—the materialists—the irrepressible conflict between science and the religious sectaries; the philosophical character of the ancient theosophies, and their sufficiency to reconcile all existing antagonisms. . . . He proposed to form a nucleus, around which might gather all the enlightened and brave souls who were willing to work together for the collection and diffusion of knowledge. His plan was to organize a society of occultists, and begin at once to collect a library and diffuse information concerning the secret laws of nature, so familiar to the Chaldeans and Egyptians, but totally unknown to our modern world of science. It was unanimously voted to organize the proposed society

forthwith. Col. Olcott was elected temporary President, and a committee appointed to draft a constitution and bye-laws.

"On the 30th October the bye-laws were amended and adopted. November 4th the council held its first meeting, and on November 17th Col. Olcott delivered his inaugural address to the Society."

In this way began the Theosophical movement, a movement destined to become world-wide; and whose work is to unite all peoples of all creeds on a common platform of Truth, to hold them together by a soul-realization of the Oneness of all Humanity, and to lead those karmically prepared up to lofty heights of soul development.

Spiritualism had already proven to the world the existence of soul, or conscious soul; the reality of continued life and the existence of realms invisible to the physical eye, but clearly defined to the psychic vision; it had given a glimpse of the powers latent in man. But spiritualism was only a step towards the truth, an awakening merely. It was necessarily very little above the materialistic level; moreover, it catered to idleness by relying upon inspiration instead of effort; and, worse than all, it led its votaries to surrender their birthright of individuality, with its limitless potencies, to the caprice of illusive beings oft-times of the lowest mental and moral calibre. The need of the time was a philosophy which necessitated long and arduous training, resulting, not in visions, but in complete self-knowledge, self-mastery, and consequent power over the inferior orders on the psychic and physical planes. A philosophy including all these possibilities and more has been given to the world by the Thesophic movement.

For a period of four years the Society in New York made apparently but little progress; however, a great work was going on; the future workers were preparing themselves, and the plan of the Masters was slowly unfolding. In London a Society was organized; so that *foci* of spiritual energy were set up in the centres of the Old and the New World. Thought was stimulated at other important points; yet the Light from the East seemed to come with fitful and feeble gleam. Ere its quickening rays could vivify the earth the land of Light must be awakened from its lethargy. The darkness of ignorance, indifference, and degradation cast over India by her Mohammedan conquerors must be dissipated; the rank weeds of materialism and irreverence sown in India's mental soil by her Christian masters must be uprooted. India had a literature, a philosophy, a practical method for developing the latent possibilities of man as a spiritual being, yet her children ignored these treasures and allowed them to be perverted and defiled by ignorant materialism.

To the West was given the noble work of arousing from their lethargy the sons and daughters of India; and by this effort the West wins the

spiritual lore of the East through which the nations of the earth shall become One.

A United States officer, Col. Olcott, who had won his rank in the war for the emancipation of the black slave, by profession a lawyer and journalist, and Mdme. Blavatsky, a Russian lady of extraordinary mental power, erudition, and world experience, accept the mission. Thus, in the very inception of the Theosophic organization, woman leads the way, she points out to man his duty; and in Theosophic teachings we hail the glorious dawn of sex-equilibration.

A Russian and an American are the founders of the Society—representatives of the two youngest nations of modern times. Is this a significant fact or merely a coincidence?

The finger of historic prophecy points to Russia as the home of the sixth Sub-Race, and to America as the cradle of the sixth Root-Race. Is there not an occult meaning to this apparent coincidence? In fact, the entire plan of the T.S. reveals the working of occult laws too far-reaching to be grasped by aught save intuition. December 1st, 1878, the founders began to prepare for India, and sailed December 17th, 1878. Immediately on arriving at Bombay they hired a bungalow and declared their principles At first it was very slow work. The world could not understand tha sane people could give up country and friends to devote themselves to such a wild scheme as the union of the Indian peoples and a resurrection of their dead literatures and religions. What will they gain by it? There must be some ulterior purpose. Universal Brotherhood is a myth. If the scheme were to minister to the physical wants of the Hindoos then it would be comprehensible. Such were the comments. Some looked upon the pioneers as fanatics; others, and these were in the majority, decided to consider Mdme. Blavatsky as a Russian spy.

However, friends were made; Mdme. Blavatsky was already known by reputation to some influential people, and Colonel Olcott was provided with an autograph letter of introduction from the President of the United States to the foreign Ministers and Consuls of America. Some enthusiastic Hindoos joined the cause; among others, later on, Damodar K. Mavalankar, a rich young Brahmin, who became the secretary in succession to Mr. Seervai, an educated Parsi gentleman. Mr. Sinnett, the editor of one of the most influential and widely circulated journals in India, attached himself to the work; and during all the persecutions to which the founders were exposed, he has been a firm friend, adherent, and defender.*

October 1, 1879, appeared the first issue of the *Theosophist* (monthly

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* This gentleman has done much to popularize Esoteric philosophy, and his work, "Esoteric Buddhism" is indispensable to every student.

magazine), with Mdme. Blavatsky as Editor. Enough money from the Founders' private resources was laid aside to keep the magazine running for one year. The review of the year 1879—1880, published in the magazine, tells us that in four months it had become self-supporting. The second year saw it circulating in India, Ceylon, Burmah, China, Persian Gulf, Great Britain, Ireland, France, Spain, Holland, Germany, Norway, Hungary, Greece, Russia, Australasia, South Africa, West Indies, North and South America. Brahmins, Buddhists, Parsees, Mohammedans, Christians, Spiritualists, Jews, hailed it with gladness, for in it they found fundamental religion. The learned among them contributed their best thought, so that the magazine soon became a rich treasure-house of Oriental Philosophy and Mysticism, as well as a broad platform of Universal Brotherhood in religious thought. The Editor's aim from the first has been "The union of creeds in the religion of Truth." In this magazine the Founders clearly state the objects of the Indian Mission to be, first, To form this union of peoples and creeds; second, To awaken a love for the old literatures and religions of India, and to bring to light the knowledge concealed in their symbols and allegories. They further announce that their society will not meddle in any of the internal questions of a doctrinal nature. They say decidedly, "The T.S. was *not* organized to fight Christianity especially, nor is it a propaganda of any one religious sect. It is a society of seekers after truth, and pledged to the work of disseminating whatever truths it discovers, whether in religion, philosophy, or science." Its motto is, "There is no Religion higher than Truth."

The learned and influential among the Hindoos, assured as to the motives of these strange missionaries, began to investigate. The work appealed to their patriotism; to all that was highest in their souls; and soon pandits, rajahs, and princes wished to unite in the cause.

Colonel Olcott, though a professed Buddhist, was invested with the Brahminical thread by the Brahmins, an honour by them considered as the highest possible mark of respect and friendship, and a testimony to the tolerance and altruism of the founders.

The founders are invited to Ceylon, 1880. This island is preponderatingly Buddhistic; although the primitive pure teachings of Gautama have been sadly perverted.

Colonel Olcott, in his clear, decided way, declares that the founders of the Theosophic movement cannot, nor will not, propagate the idolatrous perversions of primitive Buddhism fastened upon the Church in Ceylon by Tamil dynasties. Truth, not superstition, is the aim of Theosophy. This declaration made them all the more welcome to the people of Ceylon. In 57 days, seven T.S. Branches of Buddhist laymen were formed, one

ecclesiastical council of Buddhist Priests, and one scientific Society. Altogether several hundred members, numbering among them two rajahs, five great chiefs, and all the learned Buddhist priests in Ceylon, joined. The Buddhist High Priest, Sumangala, became President of the new Ecclesiastical Committee, and a Vice President of the whole Society. This high dignitary received Col. Olcott into the Buddhist Church, and authorized him to admit others. The Ceylon Section prospered largely; it has Sunday Schools, two newspapers, and also headquarters of its own in Colombo, Galle, Kandy and Ratnapura. In less than two years these strange missionaries had made a deep impression upon the thinking minds of the Far East, and had created a strong impulse towards Brotherhood in that land of Caste.

At the general meeting at Allahabad, December 15, 1880, Mr. Hume, C.B., expresses himself as follows:—

"This much I have gathered about the society, that one primary and fundamental object of its existence is the institution of a sort of Brotherhood in which, sinking all distinction of race and nationality, caste and creed, all good and earnest men, all who love science, all who love truth, all who love their fellow-men, may meet as brethren, and labour hand in hand in the cause of enlightenment and progress."

Some months before the press had realized the importance of the movement. The *Pioneer* (Allahabad) of April 28, 1880, had the following notice:—

"The progress of their work (Theosophist) is well worth attention, quite apart from all questions as to the relative merits of creeds. Europeans have come to India either to make money or convert the people. The T.S. founders have come because they are filled with a loving enthusiasm for Indian religious philosophy and psychological science."

The *Ceylon Times*, June 5, 1880, speaking of the mission of the founders, says:

"As regards the object in view in coming to India, we cannot see that any other result but good can come of honest endeavours to bring about a better, a closer intimacy in thought, word, and action between the various races to be found in the East, especially between the governing and the governed."

The learned societies of the East recognise the T.S. Society as their ally and co-worker. In the *Theosophist* of January, 1881, we find that the T.S. had made official alliances with the Sanskrit Samaj of Benares, that is to say, with the most distinguished body of orthodox Sanskrit pundits in the world; also with the Hindu Sabha of Cochin. This Hindu Sabha is composed of native gentlemen in high official positions in various states of Southern India.

In 1880 the Literary Society of the Benares Pundits tender Colonel Olcott the following testimonial :—

" We, the Pundits of Benares, certify that Col. H. S. Olcott, Pres. of the T.S., has come to India with the view of trying to aid in reviving our science and philosophy. His acceptance of the Honorary Membership of our Literary Society, the due consideration paid by him towards Oriental science and philosophy, and his just and unaffected inclination towards the Vedic truths and principles have encouraged us to present him with a certificate stating the close ties which he has formed with our Society.

(Signed) " Ramer Misra Shastri,
Balkrishner Acharaya, M.A."

The leader of the Adi Brahma Samaj, Babu-Rajnarain Bose, writes in the following strain : " It is the marvel of marvels that a stranger should come from the far, far West to India solely to rouse her from the sleep of ages, and work as a Hindu with Hindus for the regeneration of the Hindu nation. Had the system of Purana writing been still in vogue this strange event would have been narrated in striking allegories."

In August, 1881, Col. Olcott published a " Buddhist Catechism according to the Canon of the Southern Church." This Catechism was approved and recommended for use in Buddhist schools by H. Sumangala, High Priest of the Sripada and Galle, and Principal of the Parivena (Buddhist College). This dignitary made an address in its praise, as did several other priests. Sumangala ordered 100 copies for the use of the college. The first edition was sold immediately, and the Catechism has now reached the thirty-seventh thousand and fifteenth edition, and been translated into seventeen or eighteen Eastern and European languages.

A query may here arise as to whether Col. Olcott and Mdme. Blavatsky are Buddhists; and if they are Buddhists, is not the T.S. Buddhistic? In an address given at Colombo, Ceylon, Col. Olcott is reported to have said, in answer to a similar question—" As to ourselves, Yes and No." " As to the Parent Society, it may be called Buddhistic." That this reply was incorrectly reported, is stated in a footnote, which says—" The Parent Society cannot be said to be Buddhistic since it numbers among its members Christians, Mahomedans, Hindus, Parsees, Materialists and Spiritualists. The fact that the Founders are Buddhists does not affect the Society." Damodar K. Mavalankar writes :—" Since I have become a F.T.S., I am a better Aryan. I have heard my Parsee brothers say they are better Zoroastrians. Buddhists write often to the Society that the study of Theosophy has enabled them to appreciate their religion the more. They can read their religious books between the lines." A Christian Theosophist could say the same.

But to the question, "Are you a Buddhist?" the lecturer answered "yes and no." "Yes," as far as the fundamental principles are concerned; "no" in regard to the superstitions which have degraded it; the dust and slime of ages of ignorance which now hide the original beauty. So might he have answered of Brahmanism, of Christianity. Yet it must be confessed that on account of its clear teachings concerning Karma, Soul Progress, and Nirvana, its spirit of loving tenderness, its marriage of profound philosophy with practical duty, Gautama Buddha's doctrines appeal more to the disciple eager for attainment than those of any other religious system.

In 1882 the founders made a tour of India, and the account of their progress reads like a fairy tale. Everywhere the people receive them enthusiastically, dignitaries entertain them, and T.S. Branches are formed at every stopping-place.

The *Indian Mirror* of Calcutta, March 1882, in a few words describes the feelings of the Hindoos towards the T.S.

"Col. Olcott, Pres. of the T.S., is now at Howrah. He has come direct from Berhampore, where he was received by the nobility and gentry with demonstrations of joy and gratitude for his most valuable services to the natives of India."

At Calcutta, the Maharajah Jotendro Mohun Tagore, C.S.T., gives a grand soirée in honour of Col. Olcott, and entertains Madame Blavatsky, who arrived six days later. The Bengal T.S. is then organized.

The people of Guntoor sent a petition to Madame Blavatsky begging her to come to them with the Colonel. She consented, although the trip was almost impracticable for a lady. The people received them with great rejoicing. A bungalow erected by the late Dewan of the Rajah of Venkatagiri was given up to them. The house was profusely decorated with greenery and flowers, and brilliantly illuminated. At the main entrance to the compound rose an arch bearing the inscription "Welcome Theosophists." At the house porch another arch welcomed the Founders. The Oriental imagination outdid itself in homage. Verses were sung invoking the blessings of Heaven upon those who had forsaken their native land to help those who had swerved from the path of the Vedas. Madame Blavatsky is called an incarnation of Lakshmi, and to Colonel Olcott is attributed the might of Indra's Kulesa. This child-like and exaggerated admiration reveals the depth of gratitude in the Hindu heart for their first foreign friends. India had been for ages a magnet for the adventurer, the conqueror, the despoiler; but now at last friends have come who love India for itself, and love its people as brothers.

At Madras the Founders were gladly welcomed. The *Madras Times* of April 24 or 25, 1882, thus describes their arrival at that city:—

"THEOSOPHISM AT MADRAS.—Madame Blavatsky and Colonel Olcott, the well-known founders of the Theosophical Society in Bombay, arrived at Madras on Sunday morning at nine o'clock. In anticipation of their arrival, the natives assembled, and made arrangements to give their visitors a formal reception at five o'clock in the evening. Accordingly, at the hour fixed, the native community mustered strong at the pier, among whom were the Hon'ble Rajah Gajapathi Row, the Dewan Bahadur Ragunatha Row, and several leading members and merchants of the community. Boats went out to meet the steamer, the one destined for the visitors tastefully decorated. After an interchange of compliments and much cheering, the visitors were ushered into a saloon carriage, afterwards to a carriage and four, and driven to the residence fitted up for them. . . . The Deputy Inspector of Schools read the following address: 'We, the undersigned, who entertain great respect for you, welcome you to the capital of Southern India. We need hardly express our appreciation of your valuable services for our country, and we trust that your advent here will be a means of placing within our reach the advantages afforded for investigating the mysteries of nature and psychical powers latent in man.'"

At Madras, the Founders subsequently established their headquarters. Adyar, a suburb of Madras, still continues to be the centre of the Theosophical Society.

The year 1884 saw in Asia 91 branches and 17 schools, including a night school for labourers at Dumraon, Behar, and a girls' school in Guntoor District. Something had also been done for the physical needs of the suffering; a hospital at Lucknow, and two Homeopathic Dispensaries, one at Bombay, one at Bareilly, testified to the earnestness of the Fellows of the Brotherhood of Humanity. A fund for the permanent support of headquarters was started. "This fund is still growing and it is hoped that in time it will pay the expense of propaganda as well as the maintenance of headquarters. Hitherto, all excess of expenditure above the small sums received from dues and charters has been met by the private means of the Founders" (Mr. Judge, in the *Path*).

The Treasurer's Reports, audited and published in the *Theosophist*, and other Official Reports, show that the Founders expended largely. A. O. Hume states in a letter to the *Saturday Review*, September, 1881, that to his certain knowledge Col. Olcott and Mdme. Blavatsky had spent on the Theosophical Society over £2,000 (10,000 dols.) more than its total receipts. And he adds, "The accounts have been regularly audited, printed, and published, so that anyone may satisfy himself on this head."

Yet these people have been called adventurers.

India is now awakened, and the Founders turn again to Europe. Col.

Olcott was sent as the special commissioner of the Sinhalese nation to London to obtain redress for the Buddhists of Ceylon, who had suffered in a riot in 1882. Duty shone clearly, and pointed to the West, so on the 20th February the Founders, accompanied by Mohini M. Chatterjee, M.A., P.L., secretary of the Calcutta Branch, and Mr. B. J. Padshah, Fellow of the Elphinstone College of Bombay, sailed from Bombay for Marseilles. They visited France, England, Scotland, Rhenish Prussia, Saxony, Wurtemburg, and Bavaria, and sub-missions were sent to America and Egypt.

Col. Olcott, in his address to the Convention of 1884, thus describes the results of the tour :—

"Upon our arrival at Marseilles we found awaiting us pressing invitations to visit various branches and accept the generous hospitality of friends and well-wishers. We first visited Nice, on the shore of the Mediterranean. While there we were the guests of Lady Caithness, Duchess of Pomar, Honorary President of the Paris Branch. Mdme. de Pomar's social position brought us into connection with many persons of distinction, among them a number of Russians. From the latter I heard that Mdme. Blavatsky's name was now sounding throughout Russia as a most brilliant writer; and that her novels and letters from India about Hindu philosophy, traditions, sages and science had created a wide interest in this country and its people. We had several meetings to discuss Theosophy at Mdme. de Pomar's house, with the result that a number of influential persons became members of the Society. From Nice we went to Paris. Representatives of the French Press, authors, physicians, men of science, and lovers of occult research came to see us and discuss Theosophic questions; some even making the journey to Paris from distant cities. We had three nominal branches in France, but finding that it was not expedient to maintain the separate organizations, I issued a special order to cancel the charters of two of them, and concentrated all our strength into the branch of Lady Caithness and Mdme. Emilie de Marsier—that most devoted, loyal, and energetic lady and Theosophist. Leaving Madame Blavatsky in France, I crossed over to London on the 6th of April. The membership of the London Lodge more than doubled, I believe, during our stay in London. In the month of July I went from London to Edinburgh to organize our Scottish Theosophical Society. On the 17th I lectured at that 'Northern Athens' to a large audience, who listened to my exposition of Theosophy with attention. The Secretary of the Branch, Mr. E. D. Ewen, is a man of rare capacity in the department of mystical research, and is himself endowed with the faculty of 'second sight,' or psychic perception.

"July 21 we held our Farewell Meeting in London, and so great an

interest had been aroused in Theosophy that above five hundred persons met at Prince's Hall, Piccadilly, on that evening to say farewell to us. Among them were many people well known in the political, literary, scientific, and artistic world.

"On the 23rd July I went to Germany; and on the 27th, at Elberfeld, at the house of Mr. G. Gebhard, was organized the Germania Theosophical Society, with Dr. Hübbe Schleiden as President. Mrs. Gebhard was chosen as one of the Vice Presidents of the new Branch. In company with Dr. Hübbe Schleiden, Mr. Rudolph Gebhard, and Prof. Elliott Coues, F.T.S., of the Smithsonian Institution at Washington, D.C., U.S., I made a tour through a large portion of Germany, gaining members for the German Branch.

"On the shores of the lovely lake of Starnberg in Bavaria, Baron Carl du Prel, the philosopher and author, Prof. Gabriel Max, Baron Ernst von Weber, President of the International Anti-Vivisection Congress, Count and Countess von Spreti, and other important persons joined the Society. Du Prel has written works upon Spiritual Philosophy of the highest importance. One, 'Philosophie der Mystik,' is a reflex of the Vedanta. Mdme. Blavatsky, with Mohini Chatterjee and several London Theosophists, joined me, August 17th, at Elberfeld, and we remained the guests of Mr. and Mrs. Gebhard for several weeks." Col. Olcott returned to India in October. Mdme. Blavatsky remained in Europe until November.

This tour gave a strong impulse to Theosophic work, and established closer relations between the East and the West. Several Europeans joined the executive staff at headquarters. Nevertheless, 1884 was the year of the great Coulomb scandal. The storm only showed the strength of the organization, the fidelity of its members. The T.S. had endured many storms before, but the attacks had come from enemies without, now they came from traitors within.

Any sketch of Theosophy would be very incomplete and inaccurate without noting the many and varied persecutions endured by the Theosophical Society. All of these were directed at one person—Mdme. Helen P. Blavatsky's enemies felt intuitively that if she were destroyed the Theosophic movement would lose its inspiration, its greatest teacher; so the Powers of Evil concentrated their forces upon her. Never was woman more vilified, more misrepresented. While in the United States, a year previous to the inauguration of the Society, a famous spiritualistic medium circulated against her charges of so gross and reckless a nature, that they carried their own refutation with them. Moreover, the author of "Isis Unveiled" could claim the respect of the thinking world in spite of calumny.

Scarcely have the Founders arrived in India, than Mdme. Blavatsky was "shadowed" by the Government as a suspected Russian spy. No plots or counter-plots came to light, and in time the persecution ceased.

Then the Missionaries, goaded by the extraordinary success of the Theosophists, cry "Adventuress"—"Adventurer." Col. Olcott, with his clear, commonsense, stops the slanderous cry by the publication of letters, certifying his own position, and more especially the standing of Mdme. Blavatsky. Here is one from St. Petersburg:—

"I certify by these presents that Mdme. H. P. Blavatsky, now residing at Simla (British India), is from her father's side the daughter of Col. Peter Hahn, and granddaughter of Lieutenant-General Alexis Hahn von Rottenstern Hahn (a noble family of Mecklenburg, Germany) settled in Russia, and that she is from her mother's side the daughter of Helene Fadeew and granddaughter of Privy Councillor Andrev and of the Princesse Helene Dolgorouki; that she is the widow of the Councillor of State, Nicephore Blavatsky, late Vice-Governor of the province of Erivan, Caucasus.

(Signed)

"Major-General Rotislaw Fadeew, of H.I. Majesty's Staff, Joint-Secretary of State at the Ministry of the Interior, St. Petersburg, 29, Little Morckaya, 18th September, 1881."

Again, A. O. Hume, late Secretary of the Government of India, certifies that "Helene P. Blavatsky's father's mother married after her first husband's death Prince Vassiltchikoff. General Fadeyeff is her mother's youngest brother. Her aunt, Mdme. de Witte, and all the family are well known to Prince Dondoukoff, Governor-General of Odessa. Prince Emil von Sayn Wittgenstein, cousin of the late Empress, was an intimate friend of hers (Mdme. Blavatsky)."

A letter from Mdme. N. A. de Fadeef (aunt of Mdme. Blavatsky), a Christian lady of high rank and spotless character, to Col. Olcott, testifies to the high character, powerful mind, and strange gifts of her niece, Helene Blavatsky.

The publication of these letters put a stop to the slanders. There was a lull until Sept., 1884, when the *Christian College Magazine* took up the Coulombs, and published in their columns "The Collapse of Koot Hoomi." Mdme. Coulomb had known Mdme. Blavatsky in Egypt, and had there befriended the latter after a shipwreck in the Mediterranean, while she was waiting remittances from her father.

When the Founders had established themselves at Madras, Mdme. Coulomb and her husband, now paupers, again appeared. Mdme. Blavatsky took the pair in for charity, until Col. Olcott could find the husband em-

ployment. Mdme. Coulomb acted as housekeeper at headquarters, and her husband as general utility-man. Both pretended to be ardent Theosophists, Mdme. C. especially being most zealous.

By this time many of the Fellows had been favoured with letters mysteriously precipitated on rice paper, and signed by a Mahatma or Master, and phenomenally produced. At headquarters a cabinet had been specially set aside for the reception of these missives, and called "The Shrine." To those who have an extended psychic experience, these letter phenomena will not appear more extraordinary than many other occurrences, and the laws and process of precipitation are easier to understand than the superhuman cleverness necessary for imposture. But the majority are so determined to ignore any plane other than the grossly material that they are ever eager to cry fraud; and, unfortunately, those who do believe in that which is above the sense plane are so afraid that a "miracle" will be done outside of their fold that they are just as ready to re-echo the cry. Hence, when Mdme. Coulomb asserted that the mysterious letters were written by Mdme. Blavatsky, the Missionaries took up the Coulombs, and forthwith began a crusade of calumny against Mdme. B., and, through her, against the Theosophical Society. The so-called exposure took place in September, 1884, both the Founders being then in Europe. Mr. Brown, B.L., of Glasgow, Scotland, attached to the executive staff at Adyar since 1883, declared in his address before the Convention of 1884 that, notwithstanding Mdme. Blavatsky and Col. Olcott were absent in Europe, and that the Coulombs had been expelled from the Society, yet the phenomena at the headquarters, *i.e.*, letters from Mahatmas, had continued as before. Other gentlemen attested the same fact. The continuance of the letter writing during the absence of all parties concerned in the so-called fraud is proof positive of their authenticity. The calumny did good instead of harm. At the Convention in December of that year the delegates numbered 99, as against 58 of the preceding year; the influx of guests was so great that tents had to be erected in the compound. The official report of the Convention states as follows: "There was remarkable unanimity in the Convention, and it was evident that the recent attack on the Society had the effect of drawing its members closer together." A committee of the ablest judges, lawyers, and responsible citizens was appointed to make a patient and thorough investigation of the charges against Mdme. B., and also to advise her as to the course to be pursued by her. Mdme. B. desired to prosecute. The committee, having weighed all the evidence and examined the letters, declared Mdme. B. to be innocent of fraud. Their report ran as follows:—

"*Report of the Committee appointed by the annual Convention of the T.S. to advise Mdme. Blavatsky as to the best course to be taken by her with reference to*

*certain letters published in the September and following numbers of the* Christian College Magazine.

"Resolved: That the letters published in the *Christian College Magazine* under the heading 'Collapse of Koot Hoomi' are only a pretext to injure the cause of Theosophy; and as these letters necessarily appear absurd to those who are acquainted with our philosophy and facts; and as those who are not acquainted with those facts could not have their opinion changed even by a judicial verdict given in favour of Madame Blavatsky, therefore it is the unanimous opinion of this Committee that Madame B. should not prosecute her defamers in a court of law.

(Signed)

"Norendo Nath Sen, A. J. Cooper-Oakley, Franz Hartmann, M.D., S. Ramasamier, Naoroji Dorabji Khandalevalla, H. R. Morgan, Maj.-Gen., Gyanendra Nath Chakravarti, M.A., T. Subba Row, Navin K. Bannerji, P. Sreenevas Row, R. Raghunath Row, Rudolph Gebhard, P. Iyaloo Naidu, S. Subaramanna Tyer."

"The Report was received with deafening cheers. Already many letters and telegrams had been received from branches not represented and absent sympathisers, all expressing the deepest respect for the Founders and confidence in Madame Blavatsky."

The Society was proof against slander and treachery.

Franz Hartmann, in his address to this Convention, said: "The real enemies of the T.S. are not the Coulombs, nor the Missionaries, nor the Psychic Investigation, but those lukewarm and indolent members who, after joining the Society, become idle and useless. The so-called enemies have done more for our benefit in six months than a thousand supine members could have accomplished in 25 years. A vote of thanks would be only a small recompense for them. I would (were I rich enough) erect a monument in the compound of the Society to the Society's enemies." These words apply to the situation to-day, 1889, just as forcibly as they did to that of 1884.

What the Coulombs and Missionaries were to India, some recent European traitors have been and will be to Europe and the United States. The treachery is far greater, being so much nearer the centre, hence we may expect far higher results.

Some may here object that it seems strange that one endowed with powers such as Mdme. Blavatsky is known to possess should choose her friends and helpers so badly. But has she a choice? Karma is inevitable law. It may be through Karmic law that she must be thus defamed, and the defamers must work out their Karma, as must the Society. A great Master once said: "It is necessary that evil come unto the world." And that Master himself was betrayed by a friend and co-worker.

BROOKLYN THEOSOPHICAL CIRCULATING LIBRARY

Col. Olcott declares the law now operating throughout the Theosophical Society results in the defection of many and the discouragement of the remaining. "There is," he says "an element of natural selection at work in our membership, by which the indifferent, the indolent, the vain, the selfish, the morally timid, the unspiritual weed themselves out, perhaps turn hostile, and the staunch and true remain." This law may seem strange to those unacquainted with occult processes, but nearly every branch has some experience of the kind. Sometimes, indeed, an entire branch will drop out of existence, the pure elements re-appearing in another branch, while the impure are lost sight of. One thing is clear, namely, that disciples of Theosophy must learn to rise far above personality. Not a shadow of this delusion must remain. Truth must be accepted for truth's sake, not because of the personality setting it forth. We, Theosophists, are not followers of any person, no matter how great, but of Truth and Truth alone.

The mighty ones may disappear, the stars fall from heaven, yet Truth remains. Let us hold it fast.

The Coulomb case had scarcely subsided when the Psychic Investigating Committee decided that Mdme. Blavatsky was a fraud, hence the entire Theosophic scheme was a baseless fabricated vision. Those to whose consciousness occult phenomena were facts smiled at the decisions, just as they would have done if a society of blind men had denied the play of colour of the aurora. Those who endeavoured to realize the idea of Universal Brotherhood merely said, "What does it matter? Truth cannot be killed by a decision." Theosophy extended its influence as if the Psychic Investigating Committee had not existed. Its subsequent ratio of annual growth has been double what it was before the raid.

The last and cruellest blow has been the defection of one of the most noted English, and one of the cleverest and most scientific American Theosophists. "How are the mighty fallen!" Ignorant indeed are we of the workings of Karma! It is pitiful to see such defections, yet the occult law of accentuation must be remembered. As for the result, nothing could have been more beneficial in the way of strengthening and consolidating the organization.

In spite of these persecutions, or perhaps because of them, Theosophy has steadily progressed. Col. Olcott expressed the truth very beautifully when he said, "Nature has provided that the seeds of some of the most valuable plants shall be carried to otherwise inaccessible new places of germination by the sweep of the storm-wind. So have our enemies, by their very violence, done our cause the like inestimable service."

Mdme. Blavatsky returned to Europe in 1885 on account of health, and Europe needed her inspiring presence. From the time of her arrival

a new era began for Western Theosophy. Last year, 1888, the reports show that as many new members have been added to the Society as in all the twelve years preceding. The United States last April numbered twenty-six branches, Europe thirteen. Several others contemplated. The year 1888 also saw the publication of the *Secret Doctrine*, a literary wonder of the age. This work alone places he writer, Mdme. Blavatsky, in the first rank of intellectual phenomena. *Lucifer*, her new magazine, appeared in the fall of 1887. New York already issued a monthly magazine, *The Path*. The Theosophical Siftings, usually known as the T.P.S., date from 1888. Thus if a judgment may be inferred from the great interest already shown in Theosophic subjects, the next few years will see a great increase in numbers and activity.*

Is Theosophy Occultism ? and are the Founders adepts?

Theosophy is not occultism, though occultism is Theosophy. The Founders declare themselves very strongly upon this point. The *Theosophist* of January, 1881, in an editorial *resumé* of the year 1880, entitled "A Year of Philosophy," says:—"Before closing, one word must be said in correction of an unfortunate impression that has got abroad. Because our pamphlet of rules mentions a relationship between our Society aud the 'Mahatmas,' many persons fancy that these great men are personally engaged in the practical direction of its affairs; and that in such a case, being primarily responsible for the several mistakes that have occurred in the admission of unworthy members and in other matters, they can neither be so wise, so prudent, nor so far-seeing as is claimed for them. It is also imagined that the President and Corresponding Secretary (especially the latter) are, if not actually Yogis and Mahatmas themselves, at least persons of ascetic habits, who assume superior moral excellence. Neither of these suppositions is correct, and both are positively absurd. The administration of the Society is, unless in exceptionally important crises, left to the recognised officials, and they are wholly responsible for all the errors that are made.

"Col. Olcott and Madame Blavatsky do not pretend to asceticism, nor would it be possible for them to practise it while in the thick of the struggle to win a permanent foothold for the Society in the face of every possible obstacle that a selfish, sensuality-loving world puts in the way."

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* December, 1888, there were 129 branches in India. An Oriental library has been founded at the Adyar headquarters. It contained in 1888 460 volumes in Sanskrit, inclusive of MSS., 260 volumes in other Indian languages, besides a fine collection of Western thought. In 1889, it had increased its list as follows: Sanskrit, 1,245 volumes; sundry other Asiatic languages, 272; Pali, 60; Japanese, 1,469. Total, 3,046 volumes in the Oriental section of the library, in addition to about 2,000 more in the section of Western literature.

Col. Olcott accepted an invitation to visit Japan, and his tour in that country has been very successful.

While at Simla in 1880 Mdme. Blavatsky was made an instrumentality for the production of physical phenomena such as the invisible transportation of material objects. This concession to human weakness was made doubtless by "those who know" to arouse an interest in psychic possibilities in people completely engrossed in materiality. A similar concession had previously been made in New York. It was simply a means to an end, and when that end was accomplished the means were abandoned as useless. The eye-witnesses to the Simla phenomena published an account in the *Pioneer*, and the manager of the *Theosophist*, during Mdme. Blavatsky's absence, copied the *Pioneer's* article into the magazine. In the issue of January, 1881, Mdme. Blavatsky publishes a letter of regret that the article had appeared in the *Theosophist*, and at the same time enters a formal protest against the hankering after wonder-working. Here are her own words, copied from the said letter and protest: "In common with all who have made any study of Occult Science, we have the greatest repugnance to the fame of a worker of wonders or miracles." Again she says: "Let it be understood that Mdme. Blavatsky deserves no credit for the Simla phenomena, which were understood to have been done by quite a different person."

One questioner asks boldly, "Do you (Mdme. B.) or Col. Olcott undertake to teach this wonderful Vidya to anyone anxious to learn?" "No" is the decisive answer.

The *Theosophist* of January, 1881, has the following editorial notice: "If we have had one, we certainly have had a hundred intimations from strangers that they were ready to join at once if they could be sure that they would shortly be endowed with 'siddhis' or powers to work occult phenomena. Now, not a majority, nor even a respectable minority, numerically speaking, of fellows of the T.S. are students of occult science, or ever expect to become adepts. The Founders have never consented to be taken as religious leaders; they repudiate any such idea, and they have not taken, and will not take, disciples."

Can anything be plainer? No equivocation, no subterfuge, no alluring bait held out to the unwary. The Founders of the Theosophical movement have never once accredited to themselves occult powers, never posed before the world as adepts, nor even as religious leaders. They never promised occult attainments; witness the article on Practical Occultism by Madame Blavatsky in the *Lucifer* of April, 1888, which article crushed many fond hopes of would-be adepts. But they have devoted wealth, life, and good name to the sublime effort of bringing the world to a realization of Truth, of Unity, of Universal Brotherhood.

Herein lies the test of the True. When a teacher, no matter how great, sets himself up as endowed with great powers, as an initiate, an adept, a Christ—beware! The false rings here, not the true.

If he promises to TEACH (for coin) occultism, to endow his disciples with marvellous powers, Beware! still more! for he is ignorant as well as false. Occult powers cannot be taught any more than genius can be imparted by lessons at so much an hour.

The occultist becomes an occultist by virtue of accumulated Karma in that line, and few there are who have thus progressed.

But the Theosophist is the honest seeker after Truth, the wise and unselfish worker for Humanity, he who forgets the one little Self in the great all of Selves. For him exists no separation of country, class, or creed. All are one, and that one *Humanity*, and Humanity is latent Divinity. The Theosophist repudiates, not only in thought but in act, all selfishness; the mad race for wealth, the profit gained at the expense of a brother or a sister is not for him. A higher standard of morality than ever before dreamed of is preached to Humanity: The morality of Selflessness. "What is the Theosophic idea of wrong?" writes an earnest F.T.S. "It is any thought, word, or deed, which can injure anyone, self included, either physically, mentally, or morally." To abstain from wrong-doing is not sufficient, the Theosophic code of ethics demands a positive good-doing—a life devoted to others, not to self. Lo! the moral code of Buddhism:—

"To cease from all sin,
To get virtue,
To purify the heart—
This is the religion of the Buddhas."

And on these broad lines of ethics Theosophy ushers in the dawn of Altruism. All hail to the glad New Day!

# FRATERNITAS.

THE Countess Wachtmeister, Dr. Pioda, Prof. Thurman and Dr. Hartmann have a work in hand which promises well. They are organizing a company, with a capital of 50,000 francs in 500 franc (£20) shares, to build and maintain a house of retreat, upon a hill overlooking Locarno, in Switzerland, whither those desirous of studying Theosophy and Occultism may betake themselves to pursue their work, free and far from all distracting influences.

The shares are to bear no interest, any profits to be used in offering hospitality, gratuitous or on lowered terms, to earnest but impecunious students of the mystic sciences; the shareholders having, however, the right to stay at the Retreat for as long as, and whenever, they choose. Dr. Pioda has given the land on which the house is to be built, and it will be commenced as soon as the funds have been subscribed. The house will be beautifully situated with a fine view of the Lake Mageur and the valleys and mountains of Tessin. It will contain a valuable library, and will be open to shareholders the whole year.

A fifth of the capital is to be kept in hand for preliminary expenses, and as soon as the house is built and furnished, a shareholders' meeting will be called to receive the report of the interim committee. At this meeting the proposed rules of the Society, to be called "Fraternitas," will be submitted to the shareholders, decisions being taken by vote. Each share carries a vote, and absent shareholders may delegate their powers to any of those present at the meeting, but no shareholder may hold more than one fifth of the voting power of the meeting.

The health and tastes of the shareholders will be studied in every possible way, vegetarian or mixed diets being given as required, and at the lowest possible terms.

The Share List will close on 31st December, 1889, and as soon as a sufficient number of names have been received, the Secretary will send out the first call. Communications should be addressed to the Hon. Sec., Dr. A. Pioda (Junr.), F.T.S., Locarno, Switzerland.

We wish the scheme all success, if it can be carried out in the spirit of the Prospectus.

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# WHAT IS THEOSOPHY?

An investigation into the doctrines of Esoteric Buddhism, as laid out and presented in the "Secret Doctrine," and other Theosophical works, by the *New York Herald* of August 18, 1889.

[The able reviewer begins with a table of contents, which is headed with the title "Spread of the New Religion." As Theosophy is not a religion, this is the only fundamental, though almost, universal mistake made by the outsiders. Otherwise, and in all respects, this is the best, the fairest, and most serious review that has ever yet appeared in a daily paper.—Editor *T.P.S.*]

## SPREAD OF THE NEW RELIGION.

Theosophy, or, as it is termed by its later devotees, Esoteric Buddhism, is spreading among the better educated people of the world with a rapidity unequalled by any other modern cult or religion except Mormonism or Spiritualism. It has its parent society and its branch organizations in India, Russia, England, the United States, and elsewhere. While its peculiar tenets date back to a remote antiquity and include, as expounders, seers and prophets, the philosophers of the ancients, the alchemists of the Middle Ages, and the metaphysicians of the Renaisssance, it has received such an impetus in more recent times, and particularly in the present century, as to have become, in fact, an entirely new dispensation.

As Buddhism was the repudiation of sacerdotal and ritualistic Brahmanism, and Protestantism a revolution against Romanism, so the existing Esoteric Buddhism is an upheaval against the prevailing materialism of this day and generation. It is one of the most astonishing events in history, this reaction toward occultism and mysticism, in the face of the most practical and mechanical age that history records. In the present paper the *Herald* will endeavour to throw some light upon the peculiar tenets of this novel theology.

### MYSTICAL UTTERANCES FROM ANTIQUITY.

The very first steps in the direction of the explanation of Theosophy are obstructed by all the tangles which it has been possible for colossal intelligences to cast about its hidden laws and secret prophetic utterances. One who appeals to the recognized authorities for information is met by such incoherent and unintelligible language as is found in the following citations. Meanwhile, the foremost living exponents of the doctrines we are about to examine are the well-known Mdme. H. P. Blavatsky, author of "Isis Unveiled" and "The

Secret Doctrine," and Mr. A. P. Sinnett, whose "Esoteric Buddhism," "Karma," and other works, are the primers of this recondite study. The names of Professor Elliott Coues and Colonel Henry S. Olcott will also occur to the well-informed American reader in this connection; the former a naturalist of distinction, the latter a former official in the Comptroller's office of the city of New York, and now president of the parent Theosophical Sociey.

From a very ancient secret work, a translation of which has been but recently made known, are quoted the following selections:—

"The external parent, wrapped in her ever invisible robes, had slumbered once again for seventeen eternities.

"Time was not, for it lay asleep in the infinite bosom of duration.

"Universal mind was not, for there were no Ah-Hi to contain it.

"The seven ways to bliss were not. The great causes of misery were not, for there was no one to produce and get ensnared by them.

"Darkness alone filled the boundless All, for Father, Mother, and Son were once more One, and the Son had not awakened yet for the new wheel, and his pilgrimage thereon.

. . . . . .

"This is thy present Wheel, said the Flame to the Spark. Thou art myself, my image and my shadow. I have clothed myself in thee, and thou art my Vahan to the day 'Be with Us,' when thou shalt become myself and others, thyself and me. Then the builders, having donned their first clothing, descend on radiate Earth, and reign over Men—who are themselves."

It will doubtless be generally admitted that there is nothing in this that is specially encouraging to the neophyte in Esoteric Buddhism. Now, listen to what Sir Edwin Arnold says in his "Light of Asia," the beautiful metrical version of the life of Gautama Buddha:—

> "Many a house of life hath held me—seeking ever him who wrought
> These prisons of the senses, sorrow fraught; sore was my ceaseless strife;
> "But now,
> Thou builder of this tabernacle—thou!
> I know thee! Never shalt thou build again these walls of pain,
> Nor raise the roof tree of deceits, nor lay fresh rafters on the clay;
> Broken thy house is, and the ridge pole split!
> Delusion fashioned it! Safe pass I thence—deliverance to obtain."

The above being the concentrated wisdom accumulated from his studies of Buddhism by one of the most learned among Sanskrit scholars, it is to be accepted as a fair statement of Buddhist theology. Still, it does offer certain difficulties to the uninitiated. But all hitherto quoted is simplicity itself compared to what is to follow.

From the "Oracles of Zoroaster," known as "The Chaldean Oracles," and from a Greek translation of the same, and so into English, by Thomas Stanley, these passages are quoted:—

" Where the Paternal Monad is The Monad is enlarged and generates Two, for the Duad sits beside him and glitters with intellectual sections, both to govern all things and to order everything not ordered, for on the whole world shineth the Triad, in which the Monad rules.

" This order is the beginning of all section. For the Mind of the Father said that all things be cut into Three, whose will assented, and then all things were divided.

. . . . . .

" For the Paternal self-begotten Mind, understanding his work, sowed in all the fiery bond of Love, that all things might continue loving for ever.

. . . . . .

" For the Paternal Mind hath sowed symbols through the world. Which understandeth intelligibles and beautifieth ineffables—wholly division and indivisible.

" By Mind he contains the intelligibles, but introduceth sense into the worlds.

" By Mind he contains the intelligibles, but introduceth Soul into the worlds."

One does not seem to have advanced greatly by collision with these gems of Zoroastrian inspiration. Here is what Plato has to offer on this important subject :—

" To that which is divinely generated," says Plato (Republic, chap. 3, book viii.), " there is a period which is comprehended by the perfect number, whereas to that generated by man there is one, in which the augmentations, both surpassing and surpassed, after having received three separations and four boundaries of things, similar and dissimilar, increasing and decreasing, will render all things correspondent and rational; of which the sesquiternean root conjoined with the pentad, and thrice increased, affords two harmonies—one of these, the equally equal, just a hundred times as much, while the other, of equal length indeed, but of oblong shape, is of a hundred numbers from effable diameters of the pentad, each wanting one, two of which are irrational and of a hundred cubes of the triad."

This passage has been the despair of all translators of Plato and of all commentators, though efforts have been made to explain its hidden signification. It is in effect one expression (the numerical) of the most hidden mysteries of the secret doctrine.

Finally, in the way of illustrating the merely verbal difficulties involved in the study of Esoteric Buddhism, it is proper to give a quotation from the latest translation (by Isaac Myer, LL.B.) of the " Book of Zohar," the sum total of the Esoteric docrines, according to the Hebrew kabbalists. The " Zohar " is a running mystical commentary on the Pentateuch, and is about of the twelfth

century, so far as its publication to the world is concerned, though it is believed to have been originally compiled by the Rabbis as early as the second century B.C. As sample quotations we give the following :—

" The Ancient of the Ancients, the Unknown of the Unknown, has a form, yet also has not any form. It has a form through which the universe is maintained. It also has not any form, as it cannot be comprehended When it first took this form it permitted to proceed from it (Kether) nine brilliant lights, which, illuminating through it (Kether), spread upon all sides a brilliant light. Let us think of a light which is elevated and which spreads its rays in all directions. If we desire to grasp these rays it will be impossible, as we will perceive they all proceed from the one light.

" Just so the holy ancient is an elevated (absolute) light, but completely hidden and incomprehensible in itself, and we can conceive it only through its manifestation in these diffusing lights (the Sephiroth), which are, however, on the one side only partly visible, and yet on the other side are partly concealed. These (in their totality) constitute the holy name—Yhvh."

From another version of the " Zohar," entitled " The Kabbalah Unveiled," translated by S. L. MacGregor Mathers, we extract the following :—

" This is the tradition. When the White Head (Kether) propounded unto himself to superadd ornament unto his own adornment, he constituted, prepared, and produced one single spark from his intense splendour of light. He fanned it and condensed it (or conformed it).

" And he developed his thought, and extended it in three hundred and seventy directions.

" And the spark subsisted, and waited until the pure air went forth, which involved it around, and an ultimate extension having been made, he produced a certain hard skull (bounded) on four sides.

" And in that pure subtle air was the spark absorbed and comprehended and included therein.

" Dost thou not think therein ? Truly, it is hidden therein.

" And therefore is that skull expanded in its sides, and that air is the most concealed attribute of the ancient of days."

## ANTIQUITY OF MAN.

Sufficient has been given from extant authorities to show the drift of the " Secret Doctrine " and to illustrate the difficulties with which its study has ever been designedly surrounded by those who were its priests or prophets, or who had succeeded in gaining access to the inner temple of its mysteries. The reason for all this secrecy is variously given, by some being considered as an essential part of the instruction afforded by the adept to his pupil ; by others merely as a means for gaining and retaining priestly power over the masses. But so deepy implanted in the breasts of novices and adepts alike has been

this element of secrecy that nowhere does there exist such an explanation of the hidden meaning of the Esoteric doctrines as could be acquired by any one at all—uninitiated—nor even approximately without a very long period passed in the most earnest and concentrated study. This fact,, however, has not prevented the formation of secret societies for the pursuit of the study from time immemorial. This accounts for the Eleusinian Mysteries, the Mysteries of Isis, the Society of the Essences, the Rosicrucians, and, indeed, very much of Freemasonry itself.

Among the Egyptians the secret doctrine appears to have been well known. The Hebrews gathered their acquaintance with it during the Egyptian slavery and the Babylonian captivity. The records appear in Sanscrit, in Assyrian cuneiform inscriptions on tablets, in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin. Its origin is lost in the mists of antiquity, and one of its most startling tenets covers traditions with regard to the age of this world and the origin of man, running back to a period of not thousands, nor tens nor hundreds of thousands, but *tens of millions of years.*

While the " Secret Doctrine " contradicts and derides science where they disagree, it has no hesitation in using it to support assertions of the antiquity of man. Thus, geology and paleontology are brought into court as witnesses in this direction, thus archæology, and thus the science of numbers. And so far as this goes, science does sustain the figures of nearly the most remote antiquity claimed for the earth by Theosophists. But where the two sides part company is on the assertion on the part of the Theosophists that we are living in the decay of man, who, with brief periods of progress, has been sinking lower and lower in intellect, morally and physically, for many ages.

For not only were there " giants in those days " in stature, but giants in intellect as well. Esoteric Buddhism asserts that the lifetime of this world has been and will be made up of vast cycles of growth and decay; that in the beginning the world was peopled with demi-gods; that from these were created what it calls the "mind born" and the "sweat born" beings, called into existence by a mere effort of will; that the first race of beings were sexless, the second androgynous, and that it was depravity and deterioration that brought about a division of the sexes.

Esoteric Buddhism asserts that demons once peopled this fair earth; that, again, there were monsters in semi-human form who were capable of contending on equal terms with the Saurians, the Mammoth, the Mastodon, and all the gigantic forms of animal and reptile life, known to us only by their fossil remains. Esoteric Buddhism alleges that once in about twenty-five thousand years the polar axis of the earth changes, bringing about a re-distribution of land and water, and that at other periods the habitable globe is destroyed by fire (earthquakes and volcanic eruptions). It holds that the mythical Lemuria and Atlantis were actual continents, existing under conditions of civilization

far more elevated than anything that history records. It holds to the Biblical doctrine that (while these catastrophes occur periodically) man's sins are the cause of man's destruction. It claims that with each of such physical catastrophes man's arts and attainments are lost, and that there then begins a new struggle of savagery for existence, and a slow progress toward re-civilizing, always accompanied by the downward tendency of sin, in which the latter always gets the upper hand, to the encouragement of a new destruction.

Of course, a knowledge of vast periods of human or superhuman existence is essential to the theories of Esoteric Buddhism, which claim acquaintance with the actual processes of creation, since geology itself throws the world's existence back to a period of hundreds of thousands, and, as is conceded by some geologists, millions of years away. In order to bridge a distance in time of which accepted history makes no record, Esoteric Buddhism has recourse partly to tradition, and partly to alleged existing documents of a very remote period, themselves the record of traditional statements, handed down from generation to generation. But the Theosophists, still further to fortify themselves against the arguments of unbelievers, concede the necessity at certain periods for the appearance of beings, divinely inspired, from whom, they assert, have been obtained many of the facts of which they claim to be in possession with regard to the antiquity and the earliest history of the world, and even concerning the *modus operandi* of Creation itself. Such beings were Gautama Buddha and Christ and such also were Moses and Zoroaster, St. Paul and St. John the Evangelist. It is asserted that besides the teachings of these seers and prophets which have come down to us, being open to all the world, they taught also the esoteric or hidden doctrine, communicated only to initiates, of whom a certain number have existed in all ages of the world's history. But the most extraordinary statement as to the foundation of the modern knowledge of the hidden doctrines is with regard to the alleged existence of written records thereof. It is asserted that in Thibet, and elsewhere in Asia, there are subterranean depositories of manuscripts containing "the sum total of sacred and philosophical works—all the works, in fact, that have ever been written, in whatever language or characters, since the art of writing began; from the ideographic hieroglyphs down to the alphabet of Cadmus." The history of Theosophy states that after the destruction of the Alexandrian Library "every work of a character that might have led the profane to the ultimate discovery and comprehension of some of the mysteries of the sceret science was, owing to the combined efforts of the members of the brotherhoods, diligently searched for. It is added, moreover, by those who know, that, once found, save three copies left and stored safely away, such works were all destroyed. In India the last of the precious manuscripts were secured and hidden during the reign of the Emperor Akbar" (sixteenth century).

It has long been well known that the Buddhist monasteries of Thibet are the Mecca of the Theosophist. Thither the neophyte of whatever nation wends his way to study at the feet of some pundit who is himself an initiate or "Mahatma"—one to whom the secret doctrine has been laid bare—at least, so far as it is deemed judicious to inform in this day and generation those who, in their turn, are to become "teachers of men." That this should be the case is not remarkable when one recognises the belief, prevalent among Theosophists the world over, that "the secret doctrine was the universally diffused religion of the ancient and pre-historic world. Proofs of its diffusion, authentic records of its history, a complete chain of documents, showing its character and presence in every land, together with the teachings of all its great adepts, exist to this day in the secret crypts of libraries belonging to the occult fraternity." Here, it is claimed, are concealed the written records of the pre-historic philosophy of China, the ancient parchments saved from destruction with the Alexandrian Library, the thousands of Sanscrit works which disappeared from India in the reign of Akbar, the vast sacred and occult literature of Babylon, the keys which alone can unlock the mysteries of the Egyptian hieroglyphic records, and finally, the secret commentaries which make the Pedic literature intelligible.

### THE CORE OF THE SECRET DOCTRINE.

Two reasons have been given, as already stated, for the extraordinary secretiveness observed from the most ancient times down to the present regarding the exposure of the occult theories of what is now termed Esoteric Buddhism; these reasons were: first, the very fact of such secrecy having been inculcated from the beginning as a necessary part of occult teaching; and second, the self-aggrandisement of the priesthood and the accumulation by them of influence over the ignorant masses, by reason of their alleged occult powers, obtained through a knowledge of the secrets of Nature. With regard to these powers, it is stated as a part of the doctrine that man, through his "sevenfold" nature, is closely allied with planetary and cosmic forces, tremendous in their capabilities for good or evil; and that, if a clue to these occult powers were obtained by any but those who had been purified through a long novitiate of abstinence from sensual indulgence, their abuse might cause incalculable evil to humanity. With regard to these occult powers, material and immaterial, more will be told in the course of the present paper.

Regarding the strictly theological portion of the esoteric philosophy it may be well to make a plain statement here, derived from the highest modern authority, before going on to a summary of existing theosophic belief concerning human history. As formulated by the authority in question, "esoteric philosophy reconciles all religions, strips every one of its outward human garments, and shows the root of each to be identical with that of every other great religion. It proves the necessity of an absolute divine principle in Nature.

It denies Deity no more than it does the sun. Esoteric philosophy has never rejected God in Nature, nor Deity as the absolute and abstract *eus*. It only refuses to accept any of the gods of the so-called monotheistic religions—gods created by man in his own image and likeness, a blasphemous and sorry caricature of the Ever Unknowable."

It will be observed that it is in its antagonism to the anthropomorphic god of so-called "revealed religion" that theosophy is in opposition to Christianity. Excepting this position it will be found to be in harmony with the teachings of the Scriptures in every important particular, while in relation to the accepted theories of the Almighty, as preached from texts chosen from those Scriptures, theosophy simply holds that it is a case of "the blind leading the blind"—an uninformed priesthood presenting a perverted doctrine.

"There was neither day nor night, nor sky nor earth, nor darkness nor light, nor any other thing save only One, unapprehensible by intellect, or that which is Brahma and spirit and crude matter."

The above quotation is from a translation of the "Vishnu Purana," and is the Hindoo presentment of the condition prior to the creation. Of such creations it is alleged there were then seven—First, the Universal Soul; second, elemental creation or universal substance; third, organic evolution; fourth, inanimate bodies; fifth, animals; sixth, divinities; seventh, man. This theory of creation passes from generals to particulars, from higher to lower, from the abstract to the concrete. It is evolutionary to a certain extent, but stops short of Darwinism by the proposition that man, instead of being a higher organism evolved from a lower, is a descent from beings of a semi-divine nature, an occurrence caused by the degradation into sex of the previous sexless, and then androgynous, races. According to this philosophy, such creations as have been enumerated are periodical, the periods being vast beyond computation; and between these periods there is a lifeless and deathless sleep of further ages, after which the creative power awakes to a new and similar effort of septenary creation. According to Theosophy, there was warfare among the spiritual beings of the early creation and sin; and thence originated man. But man himself was originally endowed with powers which would be now deemed superhuman, and has only lost these through successive generations of decay and demoralization through sin. Among these powers one is novel in its statement, and certainly remarkable.

## LOST RACES AND LOST POWERS.

The Occultists believe, and their secret writings set forth, that not only were the early progenitors of existing man giants, but that they possessed a third eye. "There were four-armed human creatures in those early days of the male-females (androgynes), with one head, yet three eyes. They could see before them and behind them." This eye was also a sixth, or spiritual sense,

and became petrified by the degeneracy of that race. Science is called upon to sanction this claim in describing the "pineal gland," a small, pea-like mass of grey nervous matter attached to the back of the brain, and for which no use has been discovered by the physiologists. As an evidence that the existence of four-armed and three-eyed men was known to the ancients, the legends and traditions of the Cyclops are pointed out, and attention is directed to the Hindoo statues of gods having an eye in the middle of the forehead and endowed with four arms, as these are still to be seen in the Buddhist temples of India. The loss or atrophy of the third eye is attributed by the Occult authorities to the progress of sensuality. Meanwhile science, in the person of the great naturalist, Ernst Haeckel, says: "Deeply placed within the head, covered by thick skin and muscles, true eyes that cannot see are found in certain animals, blind moles and field mice, blind snakes and lizards. They shun daylight, dwelling under the ground. They were not originally blind, but have evolved from ancestors that lived in the light and had well-developed eyes. The atrophied eye beneath the opaque skin may be found in these blind beings in every stage of reversion." The occultist pertinently asks, "If two eyes could become so atrophied in lower animals, why not one eye—the pineal gland—in man?"

The importance of this "third eye" in Theosophy becomes apparent, as the student is instructed in the mysterious belief in "Karma," the Nemesis of the Esoteric Buddhist. As in Buddhism, the Theosophist believes in the three essentials:—"Maya," or illusion; "Karma," or fate; and "Nirvana," the condition of rest, which is neither sleep nor death, but is the longed-for conclusion to all the chances and changes of Life. Coincident with this belief is that of "Reincarnation," by which each new life is but the entrance upon existence of a spiritual entity which has passed through many other lives, and whose conduct in each of these—and in all of them—is, in fact, its "Karma" self-created, the doom which it inaugurates and works out for itself—according as it is or is not in harmony with the Divine Will and the law of its own structure. Thus is heredity accounted for; thus reappearance of physical of moral likeness, sometimes generations apart; thus atavism and the recurrence of original types in new species.

Says an authority on this subject: "It is only the knowledge of the constan rebirths of one and the same individuality throughout the life cycle, the assurance that the same monads—among whom are many of the gods themselves—have to pass through the cycle of necessity, rewarded or punished by such rebirth for the suffering endured or crimes committed in the former life; that these very monads are the same who are now among us—nay, ourselves perchance—it is only this doctrine that can explain to us the mysterious problem of good and evil and reconcile man to the terrible apparent injustice of life."

But it is observed that "Karma" is absolute justice, absolute impersonality. While expressed, in one sense, by the Nemesis of the Greeks, it leaves out of

the question all idea of vengeance, and is rather the "Kismet" (fate) of the Turk; without its blind character, and with the peculiar significance in Buddhism that it is the creation, in a previous state of existence, of the being who is under its influence. Briefly, "Karma" is the effect of the sum of the past—upon the present.

To return to the connection with this potent influence of the third eye, the "eye of Siva," as it is designated, the following statement best elucidates it:—"The 'eye of Siva' did not become entirely atrophied before the close of the fourth root race" (there are said to be seven root races, and we are in the fifth), "when spirituality and all the divine powers and attributes of the deva man of the third had been made the handmaidens of the newly awakened physiological and psychic passions of the physical man, instead of the reverse, the eye lost its powers. But such was the law of evolution, and it was in strict accuracy no fall. The sin was not in using those newly-developed powers, but in misusing them; in making of the Tabernacle designed to contain a god the fane of every spiritual iniquity.

"And if we say sin, it is merely that everyone should understand our meaning; as the term 'Karma' would be the right one to use in this case, while the reader, who would feel perplexed at the term 'spiritual' instead of 'physical iniquity, is reminded of the fact that there can be no physical iniquity. The body is simply the irresponsible organ, the tool of the psychic, and not of the 'spiritual man.'

And not only did man lose the powers of the "eye of Siva" through his misuse of the splendid attributes conferred upon him, but he parted also with control over those chemical and physical as well as psychic forces, the possession of which made him the demi-god he is believed by Theosophists to have been. In this connection it is interesting to recall those works by eminent authors which have exhibited an imagination employed in the very direction of those supernatural forces with which Theosophy would endow the giant natures of remote ages. The late Lord Bulwer-Lytton, in his "A Strange Story," "The Coming Race," and "The Haunted and the Haunters, or the House and the Brain," has shown himself under the influence of an imagination akin to these theories. The whole range of the literature of demonology and witchcraft, of fairies, ghosts, and hobgoblins, of mythology and angelology, is but the record of man's intuitive, though vague, perception of a possible relationship of a possible hierarchy to superior beings.

## THE HARMONY OF CREATION.

"The universe," says the "Secret Doctrine," "is called, with everything in it, Maya, because all is temporary therein, from the ephemeral life of a firefly to that of the sun, compared to the eternal immutability of the One, and the changelessness of that principle, the universe with its evanescent, ever-chang-

ing forms, must be, necessarily, in the mind of the philosopher, no better than a will-o'-the-wisp. Yet the universe is real enough to the conscious beings in it, which are as unreal as it is itself.

"Everything in the universe, throughout all its kingdoms, is conscious—*i.e.* endowed with a consciousness of its own kind and on its own plane of perception. We men must remember that because we do not perceive any signs—which we can recognise—of consciousness—say, in stones—we have no right to say that no consciousness exists there. There is no such thing as either 'dead' or 'blind' matter, as there is no 'blind' or 'unconscious' law.

"The universe is worked and guided from within outward. As above, so it is below, as in heaven so on earth; and man—the microcosm and miniature copy of the macrocosm—is the living witness to this universal law and to the mode of its action. We see that every external motion, act, gesture, whether voluntary or mechanical, organic or mental, is produced and preceded by internal feeling or emotion, will or volition, and thought or mind. As no outward motion or change, when normal, in man's external body can take place unless provoked by an inward impulse, given through one of the three functions named; so with the external or manifested universe. The whole Kosmos is guided, controlled, and animated by almost endless series of hierarchies of sentient Beings, each having a mission to perform, and who are 'messengers' in the sense that they are the agents of Karmic and Cosmic laws. They vary infinitely in their respective degrees of consciousness and intelligence, and to call them all pure spirits without any of the earthly alloy 'which time is wont to prey upon' is only to indulge in poetical fancy. For each of these Beings either was, or prepares to become, a man, if not in the present, then in a past or coming cycle. They are perfected, when not insipient men, and differ morally from the terrestrial human beings on their higher (less material) spheres, only in that they are devoid of the feeling of personality and of the human emotional nature—two purely earthly characteristics."

Again, in regard to the doctrine of "Karma:"—"This is not superstition, least of all is it fatalism. The latter implies a blind course of some still blinder power, and man is a free agent during his stay on earth. He cannot escape his ruling destiny, but he has the choice of two paths that lead him in that direction, and he can reach the goal of misery—if such is decreed to him—either in the snowy white robes of the martyr or in the soiled garments of a volunteer in the iniquitous course; for there are external and internal conditions which affect the determination of our will upon our actions, and it is in our power to follow either of the two. Those who believe in 'Karma' have to believe in destiny, which, from birth to death, every man is weaving thread by thread around himself, as a spider does his cobweb; and this destiny is guided either by the heavenly voice of the invisible prototype outside of us, or by our more intimate astral, or inner man, who is but too often the evil genius of the em-

bodied entity called man. Both these lead on the outward man, but one of them must prevail, and from the very beginning of the invisible affray the stern and implacable law of compensation steps in and takes its course, faithfully following the fluctuations. When the last strand is woven, and man is seemingly enwrapped in the network of his own doing, then he finds himself completely under the empire of this self-made destiny. It then either fixes him like the inert shell against the immovable rock, or carries him away like a feather in a whirlwind, raised by his own actions, and this is—'Karma.'"

In this connection it is not uninteresting to refer to something from Thomas Carlyle, extracted from "Sartor Resartus":—"So that this so solid-seeming world, after all, were but an air image, our me the only reality, and nature, with its thousandfold production and destruction, but the reflex of our own inward force, the 'phantasy of our dream,' or what the earth spirit in 'Faust' names it—the living visible garment of God:

In being's flood, in action's storm,
I walk and work, above, beneath;
Work and weave in endless motion!
Birth and death,
An infinite ocean;
A seizing and giving
The fire of the living:
'Tis thus at the roaring loom of time I ply,
And weave for God the garment thou seest Him by.

"An occultist or a philosopher will not speak of the goodness or cruelty of Providence; but, identifying it with Karma-Nemesis, he will teach that, nevertheless, it guards the good and watches over them in this as in future lives, and that it punishes the evil-doer—aye, even to his seventh re-birth; so long, in short, as the effect of his having thrown into perturbation even the smallest atom in the infinite world of harmony has not been finally readjusted. For the only decree of Karma—an eternal and immutable decree—is absolute harmony in the world of matter as it is in the world of spirit. It is not, therefore, Karma who rewards or punishes, but it is we who reward and punish ourselves, according to whether we work with, through, and along with Nature, abiding by the laws on which that harmony depends, or break them"

## SUBMERGED CONTINENTS.

Reference has been made to the lost continents of Lemuria and Atlantis. There is, perhaps, no other event hinted at in history or tradition so startling and terrible as is considered in the slight information afforded concerning the catastrophes which are supposed to have resulted in the destruction, many thousands of years ago, of vast tracks of thickly populated territory, with great cities, whose people conducted an enormous commerce, and whose elevation in civilization has been stated to be far more lofty than anything that it known to the human race of history. Occult teaching has the following

terse statement in regard to these phenomena, cited from one of the secret writings heretofore quoted in the present paper :—

" When the wheel runs at the usual rate, its extremities (the poles) agree with its middle circle (the equator); when it runs slower and tilts in every direction, there is a great disturbance on the face of the earth. The waters flow toward the two ends, and new lands arise in the middle belt, while those at the ends are subject to submersion."

According to similar sources of information, Lemuria was a territory which began at the foot of the Himalayas, where it bordered on an inland sea, now occupied by Thibet, Mongolia, and the great desert of Gobi. It stretched south across Southern India, Ceylon and Sumatra, embraced Madagascar on its right hand and Australia on its left, and extended to within a few degrees of the Antarctic circle and far into the Pacific Ocean—in fact, beyond Easter Island, which is believed to have been part of it.

Easter Island, by the way (latitude 27 deg. 20 min. south, longitudc, 109 deg. 30 min. west), rises 1,200 feet out of the water, is thirty miles in circumference, and is peopled by about two thousand wretched savages. Yet on this insignificant and isolated point in the Pacific are to be found multitudes of stone statues, some of them of colossal size, standing on long platforms of Cyclopean masonry. The present inhabitants, whose language is radically the same as that of Tahiti have no tradition of the race that made them. Says " Chambers' Cyclopædia " :—" The existence of these sculptures is thought to strengthen the conclusion arrived at on other grounds, that the Polynesian Islands are relics of a submerged continent."

Still another submerged continent included Greenland, and what is now Behring Straits on one side, and on the other a tract extending from Spitzbergen to the Straits of Dover. This is believed to have been raised simultaneously with the disappearance of Lemuria, presumably destroyed by earthquakes and volcanic fires.

But the instance most frequently alluded to in literature as illustrating the possible periodical recurrence of catastrophes resulting in the disappearance and reappearance of continents on the face of the earth is found in the story of the lost continent of Atlantis. As to this phenomenon all the records have been searched and the evidences collected in " Atlantis, the Antediluvian World," a work by Ignatius Donnelly, to which the reader is referred for fuller information. In the space allowed here it is only possible to give the statement of Plato on the subject, which has originated whatever study has been made in this direction as being the only authoritative assertion regarding it. Plato's account of it is found in the " Timæus," and is briefly to this effect :—

Solon, the Greek lawgiver, and one of the " Seven Wise Men " (638 B.C.), in the latter years of his life, travelled much abroad, and particularly in Egypt. At Sais, the Egyptian capital under Amasis, was a temple in Neith or Isis, in

which was the celebrated inscription, "I am past, present and future; no one has lifted my veil; the fruit I have brought forth is the sun." A priest of this temple told Solon that in their sacred records was recorded the history of a mighty people which had occupied a vast continent extending west from the pillars of Hercules (at the entrance to the Mediterranean), and which "was larger than Libya and Asia put together." (Libya was all of Africa except Egypt.) Here a powerful league of kings held sway, and they had subjugated all of Libya to Egypt and a great part of Europe. Subsequently, he said, this entire continent had, through violent earthquakes and deluges, been plunged beneath the sea and entirely disappeared. The priest further said to Solon:—"You are all youths in intelligence, for you hold no ancient opinions derived from remote tradition, or any system of discipline that can boast of a hoary old age—and the cause of this is the multitude and variety of destruction that have been and will be undergone by the human race, the greater indeed arising from fire and water, others of less importance from ten thousand other contingencies. The story, for instance, that is current among you, that Phaeton, the offspring of the Sun, once attempting to drive his father's chariot, and not being able to keep the track observed by his parent, burnt up the surface of the earth, and perished himself, blasted by lightning, is generally regarded as fabulous, but in point of fact it refers to a declination (or parallax) of the heavenly bodies revolving round the earth, and indicates that at certain long intervals of time the earth's surface is destroyed by mighty fires. When this occurs, then those who dwell either on mountains or in lofty and dry places perish in greater numbers than those dwelling near rivers or on the seashore, whereas to us the Nile is not only our safeguard from all other troubles, but liberates and preserves us also from this in particular; and, again, when the gods, to purify the earth, deluge its surface with water, then the herdsmen and shepherds on the mountains are preserved in safety, while the inhabitants of your cities are hurried away to the sea by the impetuosity of the rivers. In this our country, on the other hand, the waters neither then fell nor ever have fallen from above upon the plains, but, on the contrary, are naturally driven upward from the earth's interior, and to these causes it is owing that the most ancient things are said to be here preserved."

The importance of this alleged record of the disaster to Atlantis (as this submerged continent has been called) lies in the fact that it apparently sustains the belief of the Theosophists, that the present race of men descends from one much higher in power and civilization; while it also illustrates and accredits their oft-repeated assertion of the existence of records of the most remote periods in the far East. And in this connection it is interesting to refer to the Scriptures (Luke, xvii. 26, etc.):—

"And as it was in the days of Noe, so shall it be in the days of the Son of man.

"They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and the flood came, and destroyed them all.

. . . . . .

"Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed.

"In that day, he which shall be upon the housetop, and his stuff in the house, let him not come down to take it away, and he that is in the field, let him likewise not return back," etc. (And also Luke xxi. 25, etc.):—

"And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring;

"Men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth; for the powers of heaven shall be shaken."

Here it may be observed that the Theosophists are firm believers in the concealed records alleged to exist in the measurements of the Pyramid of Ghizeh (or Cheops), which has become the foundation of a cult of its own. It is held by pyramid students that its measurements are closely symbolical of the relations of the planets, the earth's mean distance from the sun, and other important scientific facts. It is curious that this pyramid, with all its occult teachings, should have been placed in a spot, as the priest of Isis informed Solon, peculiar in its exemption from the conflagrations and deluges which periodically destroy such a large portion of the earth's surface. This is the more significant that the very word "pyramid" comes from a root which, both in Egyptian and Greck, means fire, while its position on the banks of the Nile (noted for its annual floo or overflow) would suggest water. It might be, therefore, that the true meaning of this monument, whose purpose has so long baffled Egyptologists, was an intimation of cataclysms and conflagrations at periods—possibly set forth in the hidden numbers of its own measurement.

Geologists, besides to a certain extent conceding the possible existence and submergence of the Continent of Atlantis, admit the fact (as heretofore stated) that Scandinavia and the British Islands were once united to the mainland, the Straits of Dover being a comparatively recent break. So, also, the shallow North Sea and the passages between Norway and Sweden and Denmark were once a part of the Continent. Now, one of the most interesting incidents known to natural history points to the existence of submerged land then connected with Scandinavia, and also affords one of the most astonishing cases of atavism (inherited tendency) ever enumerated.

This incident is the migration of the lemming, or "Norway rat."

Once in ten years myriads of these little animals congregate together from throughout Norway and proceed from north-east to south-west in a migration which becomes absolutely formidable in its numbers. Whatever their purpose, their tendency is always towards the Atlantic Ocean, and to reach that

destination they swim rivers, encounter all conceivable obstacles, turn not aside for any danger or interruption, and when at last they have reached the coast, plunge into the ocean and perish miserably.

Their number is said to be millions. They start all together, as by a pre-concerted arrangement, and they never stop—and no power has been able to make them stop—until the end. As to this wonderful phenomenon an authority upon the "Secret Doctrine" says:—"At certain periods, we learn, multitudes of these animals swim to sea and perish. Coming, as they do, from all parts of Norway, the powerful instinct which survives throughout ages as an inheritance from their progenitors, impels them to seek a continent once existing, but now submerged beneath the ocean, and to court a watery grave."

### THE POWERS OF LIGHT AND DARKNESS.

The Theosophists believe that Atlantis and the other submerged lands of the earth have been engulfed, not once, but many times. They believe (so informed by the traditions and ancient records of the East) that millions of years ago, when man was not as we know him, the then existing Atlantis was peopled by a race of sorcerers who employed the powers of darkness in the pursuit of evil, and who were at length destroyed off the face of the earth. Says the authority:—"What was the religion of the third and fourth races ('it was the fourth race only which was the first completely human species, however much larger in size than we are now'). In the common acceptation of the term, neither the Lemurians nor yet their progeny, the Lemuro-Atlanteans, had any, as they knew no dogma nor had they to believe on faith. No sooner had the mental eye of man been open to understanding, than the Third Race felt itself one with the ever present as the ever to be unknown and invisible All, the One Universal Deity. Endowed with divine powers and feeling in himself his inner God, each felt he was a Man God in his nature though an animal in his physical Self. The struggle between the two began from the very day they tasted of the fruit of the Tree of Wisdom; a struggle for life between the spiritual and the psychic, the psychic and the physical. Those who conquered the lower principles by obtaining mastery over the body joined the 'Sons of Light.' Those who fell victims to their lower natures became the slaves of Matter. From 'Sons of Light and Wisdom' they ended by becoming the 'Sons of Darkness.' They had fallen in the battle of mortal life with Life immortal, and all those so fallen became the seed of the future generations of Atlanteans."

Holding as they do that the Esoteric meaning of the Bible bears reference, not to time, but to eternity, the Theosophists point, for indorsement of this position, to such passages as this (Ephesians, vi. 12):—

"For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places."

But the "Secret Doctrine" holds also that the supernatural powers which were controlled by all beings in the early ages of creation, and which were distorted and turned to sinful uses in those of the fallen creatures referred to above, are still accessible to those who hold the keys to their employment. And this, they claim, is the case with the adepts of their faith, the Yogis, Arhats, and Mahatmas, as they are termed, who are the connecting links between the human nature of our time and those superhumanly endowed beings who preceded humanity. They believe in "Kriyasakti," "the mysterious power of thought which enables it to produce external, perceptible, phenomenal results by its own inherent energy. The ancients held that any idea will manifest itself externally if one's attention (and will) is deeply concentrated upon it; similarly, an intense volition will be followed by the desired result. A Yogi generally performs his wonders by means of Itchasakti (will power) and Kriyasakti. The reader will here be reminded of Schopenhauer's demonstration of "The World as Nill and Idea," though Schopenhauer and Von Hartmann and the whole pessimistic school are opposed by the Theosophists.

As influences suggestive of the power just named, the mind recalls at once—intuition, prevision, and premonition (the myth of Prometheus), mind reading, psychology, animal magnetism, or "Mesmerism," hypnotism—and other faculties or mental forces, which have at various times occupied the attention of communities, as evincing the capacity to produce abnormal phenomena by an effort of the will, combined with various methods of manipulation. The material and semi-material phenomena, alleged to have been produced by Spiritualism, for instance, are all (when genuine)—say the Theosophists—brought about by the employment of means well known to their "Masters" and "Mahatmas." That these phenomena are copied and reproduced by mere jugglery or sleight of hand, in many instances, does not in the least, say they, impugn the veracity or the occult knowledge of the professors of the "Secret Doctrine." Certainly it is a fact that the tendency to copy or counterfeit any good or attractive thing is as old as Creation itself. Nature is a marvel to the human intelligence in its aptitude at precisely this art. So that the similarities to be traced between man and the lower animals, and between natural and artificial objects—where the latter are not copies of the former—are world-wide in occurrence. And this which occurs in Nature naturally is brought about by man artificially, and for the purpose of deception. So that, say the Theosophists, there is no good reason for doubting the possibility or the fact of the production of so-called supernatural phenomena by natural means, because corrupt imitations and counterfeits of them are produced by artificial means.

Thus the Spiritualists complain that they are under a cloud because of the tricks of false "mediums" who perform pretended miracles for money. The celebrated "cabinet trick" of the Spiritualists and their imitators, the phenomena of "impersonation" and "materialization," so often represented in bad

counterfeits, and as often publicly exposed, the extraordinary "levitation act" of Daniel Douglass Home, are all alleged to be within the actual powers of the Mahatmas and Arhats of India and Thibet. The legitimate work of the Indian jugglers is all claimed to be performed through their knowledge of occult forces, gained through lives of asceticism. Such are the basket and snow trick, the "mysterious disappearance," the "miraculous pear tree," and finally the great "burial" act, which has been tried and attested hundreds of times in India, before witnesses innumerable. In India, too, have been performed, in times past, the most difficult and dangerous operations in surgery under the influence and through the power of animal magnetism. And not in India alone, but in England and in this country, and even in the city of New York, witnesses are not wanting to give their testimony to miraculous performances and occult productions—quite equal in mystery and wonder to any heretofore mentioned.

To recapitulate:—Theosophy asserts the age of man and his human and semi-human and demi-god ancestry, in this world, to be many millions of years. It alleges that his remote ancestry had control of the hidden powers of Nature, and that this control, being lost, through misuse, to succeeding generations, is now held only by certain favoured ones, whose lives have been chaste and whose time has been passed in study of the occult.

Theosophy declares that all religions are alike in their essence and foundation, but denies the anthropomorphic God of Christianity, accepting, however, much of the Scriptures as the esoteric wisdom of the "Secret Doctrine." It adopts the theory of periodical catastrophes—changing the face of the world and destroying entire races of men. It declares the present race to be in its decadency, through the fall into materialism, and intimates that the next periodical cataclysm or conflagration is near at hand. It holds to the belief in the doctrine of metempsychosis to the extent of assuming frequent reincarnation to be a part of the life of man. It believes in "Karma" or abstract retributive justice, and that for the operation of this law man is himself responsible, being, in fact, his own "Nemesis." Theosophy believes in the necessity for good and evil; in free will so far as the details of this life is concerned, and in the appearance, from time to time, of "Avatars," or redeemers—of which Buddha was one and Christ another.

The Theosophical Society was founded in 1875—

1. To form the nucleus of a universal brotherhood of man, without distinction of race, colour, sex, or creed.

2. To promote the study of Aryan and other Eastern literatures, regions, and sciences.

3. A third object—pursued only by a portion of the members of the society—is to investigate unexplained laws of Nature and the psychical powers of man.

The "Theosophical Society" has headquarters in Madras, London, and New York.

# AN OPEN LETTER

## TO THE READERS OF "LUCIFER" AND ALL TRUE THEOSOPHISTS.

As *Lucifer* was started as an organ of the Theosophical Society and means of communication between the senior Editor and the numerous Fellows of our Society for their instruction, and as we find that the great majority of subscribers are not members of the Theosophical Society, while our own brothers have apparently little interest in, or sympathy with, the efforts of the few real workers of the Theosophical Society in this country, such a state of affairs can no longer be passed over in silence. The following lines are, therefore, addressed *personally* to every F.T.S., as to every reader interested in Theosophy, for their consideration.

I ask, is *Lucifer* worthy of support or not? If it is not, then let us put an end to its existence. If it is, then how can it live when it is so feebly supported? Again, can nothing be devised to make it more popular, or theosophically instructive? It is the earnest desire of the undersigned to come into closer relation of thought with her Theosophist readers. Any suggestion to further this end, therefore, will be carefully considered by me; and as it is impossible to please all readers, the best suggestions for the general good will be followed out. Will, then, every reader try and realize that his help is now personally solicited at this effort of solidarity and brotherhood? The monthly deficits of *Lucifer* are considerable, but they would cheerfully be borne --as they have been for the last year by only two devoted Fellows—if it were felt that the magazine and the arduous efforts and work of its staff were appreciated and properly supported by the Theosophists, which is not the case. To do real good and be enabled to disseminate theosophical ideas broadcast, the magazine has to reach ten times the number of readers that it does now. Every subscriber or F.T.S. has it in his power to help in this work; the rich subscribing for the poor, the latter trying to get subscriptions, and every other member making it his duty to notify every brother theosophist of the present deplorable state of affairs concerning the publication of our magazine. It needs a fund, which it has never had, and it is absolutely necessary that a subscription list should be opened in its pages for donations towards such a publication fund of the magazine. Names of donators, or their initials, and even pseudonyms—if they so desire it—will be published each month. It is but a few hundred pounds which are needed, but without these *Lucifer* will have to cease.

BROOKLYN THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY CIRCULATING LIBRARY

It is the *first* and last time that I personally make such an appeal, as any call for help, even for the cause so dear to us, has always been unutterably repugnant to me. But in the present case I am forced to sacrifice my personal feelings. Moreover, what do we see around us? No appeal for any cause or movement that is considered good by its respective sympathisers is ever left without response. The Englishman and the American are proverbially generous. Let "General" Booth clamour in his *War Cry* for funds to support the Salvation Army, and thousands of pounds pour in from sympathetic Christians. Let any paper open a subscription list for any mortal thing, from the erection of an institute for the inoculation of a virus, with its poisonous effects on future generations, or the building of a church or statue, down to a presentation cup, and the hand of some portion of the public is immediately in its pocket. Even an appeal for funds for a "Home" for poor stray dogs, is sure to fill the subscription lists with names, and those who love the animals will gladly give their mite. Will, then, Theosophists remain more indifferent to the furtherance of a cause, which they must sympathise with, since they belong to it, than the general public would for street dogs? These seem hard words to say, but they are true, and justified by facts. No one knows better than myself the sacrifices made in silence by a few, for the accomplishment of all the work that has been done since I came to live in London, two and a-half years ago. The progress accomplished during this time by the Society in the face of every opposition—and it was terrible—shows that these efforts have not been made in vain. Yet, as none of the "few" possess the purse of Fortunatus, there comes a day when even *they* cannot give what they no longer possess.

If this appeal is not responded to, then the energy that supports *Lucifer* must be diverted into other channels.

Fraternally yours,

H. P. Blavatsky.

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# THE LIFE OF A CHRISTIAN PHILOSOPHER.

By FRANZ HARTMANN, M.D.

## SPIRITUALITY.

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# THE LIFE OF A CHRISTIAN PHILOSOPHER.

**"The fulness of time has taken place, and the kingdom of God has arrived. Repent and believe in the gospel of truth."—J. B.**

JACOB BOEHME was born in the year 1575, at Alt Seidenburg, a place about two miles distant from Goerlitz in Germany. He was the son of poor country people, and in his youth he herded the cattle of his parents. He was then sent to school, where he learned how to read and to write, and afterwards he entered as an apprentice a shoemaker's shop.

It seems that even in early youth he was able to enter into an abnormal state of consciousness and to behold images in the astral light; for once, while herding the cattle and standing on the top of a hill, he suddenly saw an arched opening of a vault, built of large red stones, and surrounded by bushes. He went through that opening into the vault, and in its depths he beheld a vessel filled with money.

He, however, experienced no desire to possess himself of that treasure; but, supposing that it was a product of the spirits of darkness made to lead him into temptation, he fled.

On a later occasion, while left alone in the shoemaker's shop, an unknown stranger entered, asking to buy a pair of shoes. Boehme, supposing himself not entitled to make such a bargain in the absence of his master, asked an extraordinary high price, hoping thus to get rid of the person who desired to purchase. Nevertheless, the stranger bought the shoes and left the shop. After leaving, he stopped in front of the shop, and, with a loud and solemn voice called to Boehme:

"Jacob, come outside."

Boehme was very much astonished to see that the stranger knew his name. He went out in the street to meet him, and there the stranger, grasping him by the hand, and, with deeply penetrating eyes looking into his eyes, spoke the following words: "Jacob, you are now little; but you will become a great man, and the world will wonder about you. Be pious, live in the fear of God, and honour His word. Especially do I admonish you to read the Bible; herein you will find comfort and consolation; for you will have to suffer a great deal of

trouble, poverty, and persecution. Nevertheless, do not fear, but remain firm; for God loves you, and is gracious to you." He then again pressed Boehme's hand, gave him another kind look and went away.

This remarkable event made a great impression on the mind of Jacob Boehme. He earnestly went through the practical exercises necessary in the study of practical occultism; that is to say, he practised patience, piety, simplicity of thought and purpose, modesty, resignation of his self-will to divine law, and he kept in mind the promise given in the Bible, that those who earnestly ask the Father in Heaven for the communication of the Holy Ghost will have the spirit of sanctity awakened within themselves, and be illuminated with His wisdom.

Such an illumination, indeed, took place within his mind, and for seven days in succession Jacob Boehme was in an ecstatic state, during which he was surrounded by the light of the Spirit, and his consciousness immersed in contemplation and happiness. It is not stated what he saw during those visions, nor would such a statement have the result of gratifying the curiosity of the reader; for the things of the spirit are inconceivable to the external mind, and can only be realized by those who, rising above the realms of the senses and entering a state of superior consciousness, can perceive them. Such a state does not necessarily include the exercise of the external faculties; for, while Plato says about Socrates, that the latter once stood immovable for a day and a half upon one spot, in a state of such ecstasy, in the case of Jacob Boehme we find that during a similar condition he continued his external occupations in his profession.

Afterwards, in the year 1594, he became master-shoemaker, and married a woman, with whom he lived for thirty years, and there were four sons born to him, who followed the same profession as himself.

In the year 1600, in the twenty-fifth year of his age, another divine illumination took place in his mind, and this time he learned to know the innermost foundation of nature, and acquired the capacity to see henceforth with eyes of the soul into the heart of all things, a faculty which remained with him even in his normal condition.

Ten years afterwards, *anno* 1610, his third illumination took place, and that which in former visions had appeared to him chaotic and multiplied was now recognized by him as a Unity, like a harp of many strings, of which each string is a separate instrument, while the whole is only one harp. He now recognized the divine order of nature, and how from the trunk of the tree of life spring different branches, bearing manifold leaves and flowers and fruits, and he became impressed with the necessity of writing down what he saw and preserving it.

Thus, beginning with the year 1612, and up to his end in the year 1624, he wrote many books about the things which he saw in the light of his own spirit, comprising thirty books full of the deepest mysteries regarding God and the

angels, Christ and Man, Heaven and Hell and Nature, and the secret things of the world, such as before him no man is known to have communicated to this sinful world, and all this he did, not for the purpose of earthly gain, but for the glorification of God and for the redemption of mankind from ignorance regarding the things of the Spirit.

But his first work, entitled "Aurora" (the beginning of the new day), was not quite finished, when, by the indiscretion of a friend, copies of the manuscript came into the hands of the clergy. The head parson of Goerlitz, whose name was Gregorius Richter, a person entirely incapable of conceiving of the depths of that religion which he professed to teach, in ignorance of the divine mysteries of true Christianity, of which he knew nothing but its superficial aspect and form, too vain to bear with toleration that a poor shoemaker should be in possession of any spiritual knowledge which he, the well-fed priest, did not possess, became Jacob Boehme's bitterest enemy, denouncing and cursing the author of that book, and his hate was raised to the utmost degree by the meekness and modesty with which Boehme received the inquiries and denunciations directed toward him.

Soon the bigoted priest publicly in the pulpit accused Boehme of being a disturber of the peace and an heretic, asking the City Council of Goerlitz to punish the traitor, and threatening that if he were not removed from the town, the anger of God would be awakened and he would cause the whole place to be swallowed up by the earth, in the same manner in which he claimed that Kora, Dathan, and Abiram had perished after resisting Moses, the man of God.

In vain Jacob Boehme attempted to reason personally with the infuriated Doctor of Divinity. New curses and insults were the result of his interview with him, and the parson threatened to have Jacob Boehme arrested and put him in prison. The City Council was afraid of the priest, and, although he could not substantiate any charge against Boehme, nevertheless, they ordered him to leave the town for fear of the consequences that might result if they did not comply with Rev. Richter's request.

Patiently Boehme submitted to the unjust decree. He requested to be permitted to go home and take leave of his family before going into banishment, and even this was refused to him. Then his only answer was: "Very well; if I cannot do otherwise, I will be contented."

Boehme left; but during the following night greater courage entered into the hearts and a better judgment into the heads of the Councilmen. They reproached themselves for having banished an inoffensive man, and the very next day they called Jacob Boehme back, and permitted him to remain, stipulating, however, that he should give up to them the manuscript of the "Aurora," and that henceforth he should abstain from the writing of books.

For seven years, Boehme, in obedience to this foolish decree, restrained himself from writing down the experiences which he enjoyed in the realm of

the spirit, and, instead of bringing light to mankind, contented himself with mending their shoes. Hard was the battle required to stem the tidal wave of the spirit, which with overpowering strength descended upon his soul; but at last, encouragegd by the advice of his friends, who counselled him not to resist any longer the impulse coming from God, for fear of disobeying man-made authorities, he resumed the labour of writing.

The writings of Jacob Boehme soon made their way in the world, and attracted the attention of those who were capable of realizing and appreciating their true character. He found many friends and followers among the high and the lowly, the rich and the poor, and it seemed, indeed, as if a new outpouring of the Spirit of Truth was intended to take place in priest-ridden and bigoted Germany.

Jacob Boehme during that time wrote a number of books and pamphlets: —"Aurora"; "The Three Principles of Divine Being"; "The Three-fold Life of Man"; "The Incarnation of Jesus Christ"; "The Six Theosophical Points"; "The Book of Terrestrial and Celestial Mysteries"; "Biblical Calculation Regarding the Duration of the World"; "The Four Complexions"; "His Defence"; the book about "The Generation and Signature of all Beings"; of "True Repentance," "True Regeneration," "The Supersensual Life," "Regeneration and Divine Contemplation," "The Selection of Grace," "Holy Baptism," "Holy Communion," "Discourse between an Enlightened and an Unilluminated Soul," an essay on "Prayer," "Tables of the Three Principles of Divine Manifestation," "Key to the most Prominent Points," "One Hundred and Seventy-seven Theosophical Questions," "Theosophical Letters," and other smaller works and articles regarding philosophical matters.

In March, 1624, and shortly before his death, began for Jacob Boehme a time of great suffering. In 1623, Abraham von Frankenburg had some of Boehme's works published under the title of "The Way to Christ," and the appearance of this book, full of Divine Truth, again inflamed the envy and rage of the angry parson of Goerlitz, being blown into a flame by the observation of the great favour with which the book was received by all truly enlightened minds. With the utmost fury he began again his persecutions of Jacob Boehme, cursing and damning him from the pulpit, and published against him a pasquillo, full of personal insults and vulgar epithets, which contained neither reason nor logic; but in their places innumerable calumnies, such as only the brain of a person made insane by passion could invent or concoct.

This time Boehme did not remain so passive as on a former occasion; but he handed over to the City Council a written defence in justification of what he had done, and he moreover wrote a reply to Richter, answering in a quiet and dignified manner every point of the objection raised by Richter, annihilating his arguments by the force of his logic and by the power of truth. This defence was not in an ironical style, but pregnant with love and pity for the misguided

man, modest and eloquent to a degree such as rarely can be found even among the greatest orators.

The City Council, however, being once more intimidated by the blustering priest, did not accept Boehme's defence, but expressed a wish that he should voluntarily leave the town, and they expressed their wish to him in the form of a well-meant advice, to save him from incurring the fate of heretics, which was to be burned alive on a stake by order of the Kurfürst or Emperor, either of whom might have been inclined to lend a willing ear to the representations of the clergy, being supposed to hestitate very little to give the requisite order, if the whim of the priesthood could be gratified by such a comparatively insignificant thing as the execution of a troublesome person who disturbed their peace

Boehme, in obedience to that advice, which he well knew was a command in disguise, left Goerlitz on the 9th day of May, 1624, and went to Dresden, where he found an asylum in the house of a physician named Dr. Benjamin Hinkelman. There he received many honours and offers of aid; but he remained modest, writing to a friend that he intended to put his trust in no man, but in the living God; and that, as he was doing so, he was full of joy and all was well.

About this time Boehme, by order of the Kurfürst, was invited to take part in a learned disputation which was to take place between him and some of the best theologians of those times, including two professors of mathematics. The discussion took place, and Boehme astonished his opponents by the depths of his ideas and by his extraordinary knowledge in regard to divine and natural things; so that, when asked by the Kurfürst to give their decision, the theologians begged for time to investigate still more the matters which Boehme had represented to them, and which seemed to reach to the limits of what they believed themselves capable of grasping. One of these theologians, Gerhard by name, was heard to say that he would not take the whole world if it were offered to him as a bribe to condemn such a man, and the other, Dr. Meissner, answered that he was of the same opinion, and that they had no right to condemn that which surpassed their understanding; and thus it may be seen that not all the theologians were like Gregorius Richter; but that in the clerical profession, as in any other, there may be wise men and fools. Such theologians, of noble mind and without bigotry, were henceforth to be found among Jacob Boehme's admirers and friends, and whenever he met them he treated them with respect.

Soon afterwards he wrote his last work, entitled "Tables Regarding Divine Manifestation," and, having returned to his home, he was taken sick with a fever. His body began to swell, and he announced to his friends that the time of his death was near, saying: "In three days you will see how God has made an end of me." Then they asked him whether he was willing to die; and he

replied: "Yes, according to the will of God." When his friends expressed the hope to find him improved on the following day, he said: "May God help that it shall be as you say. Amen."

This took place on a Friday; but on the next Sunday, on the 20th of November, 1624, before 1 A.M., Boehme called his son, Tobias, to his bedside, and asked him whether he did not hear a beautiful music, and then he requested him to open the door of the room so that the celestial songs could better be heard. Later on, he asked what time it was, and when he was told that the clock struck two, he said: "This is not yet time for me; in three hours will be my time." After a pause he again spoke, and said: "Thou powerful God Zabaoth, save me according to thy Will." Again he said "Thou crucified Lord Jesus Christ, have mercy upon me, and take me into Thy kingdom." He then gave to his wife certain directions regarding his books and other temporal matters; telling her also that she would not survive him very long (as, indeed, she did not), and, taking leave from his sons, he said, "Now I shall enter the paradise." He then asked his eldest son, whose loving looks seemed to keep Boehme's soul from severing the bonds of the body, to turn round, and, giving one deep sigh, his soul gave up the body to the earth to which it belonged, and entered into that higher state which is known to none except those who have experienced it themselves.

Jacob Boehme's enemy, the bigotted head-parson, Gregorius Richter, refused a decent burial to the corpse of the philosopher, and, as the City Council of Goerlitz, again in fear of the priest, were wavering and uncertain what to do, it was already decided to take the body for burial to a country place belonging to one of Boehme's friends, on which occasion, undoubtedly, a row would have taken place, and the ceremony be disturbed by the populace, whose prejudices were aroused by the clergy; but at the apppropriate time the Catholic Count Hannibal von Dronha arrived, and ordered the body to be buried in a solemn manner, and in the presence of two of the members of the City Council. This took place accordingly; but the parson pretended to be sick, and took medicine so as to avoid being obliged to hold the funeral sermon, and the clergyman who held the sermon in his place, although he himself had given absolution and the sacrament to Boehme shortly before the latter died, began his speech by expressing his great disgust at having been forced to do so by order of the Council.

Some friends of Boehme in Silesia sent a cross to be put on his grave; but it was soon destroyed by the hands of some bigot, who imagined to please God by insulting the memory of a man who was obnoxious to the priests; but who had done more to bring to mankind a true knowledge of God than priest-craft ever did in modern or ancient times.

In his exterior appearance, Boehme was little, having a short, thin beard, a feeble voice, and eyes of a greyish tint. He was deficient in physical strength;

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nevertheless, there is nothing known of his having ever had any other disease than the one that caused his death. But, if Jacob Boehme was small in body, he was a giant in intelligence and a powerful spirit. His hands could accomplish no greater works than to write and to make shoes; but the power of God having become manifest in that apparently insignificant organism and compound of natural and spiritual principles which represented the man Jacob Boehme, on this terrestrial globe, was strong enough to overthrow, and is still overthrowing, the most petrified and gigantic superstitions existing in his own and subsequent centuries. His "Spirit" is still battling with the powers of darkness, and the Light which was kindled in the soul of poor little Jacob Boehme is still illuminating the world, growing larger and brighter from day to day in proportion as mankind becomes more capable of beholding it, and of receiving and grasping his ideas. His spirit, or to speak more correctly, the Spirit of Truth as manifested through the writings of Jacob Boehme, is gradually bringing life into old dry-bone theology, killing clericalism and bigotry, superstition and ignorance, the giant monsters which have been devastating the world for ages past, and to whom more victims have been sacrificed than have died by the hands of the god of war, by pestilence and drugs. The thinking part of humanity is beginning to see that there is a vast difference between the true spirit of Christian religion and its external form in which it is represented to the vulgar mind. Even the better class of clergy—that is to say, those who are not fully absorbed in the dogmatic opinions which were engrafted into their minds in their schools, but who dare to seek for self-knowledge in God—know that a clinging to the external forms of religion prevents the mind from penetrating into their depths and grasping the spirit that produced these forms, and which is one and the same in all great religions; for the truth is universal, external and only one; it is the learned ones who take a multiple aspect of it, and regard it through manifold coloured glasses.

Among the most prominent followers and successors of Jacob Boehme might be named many celebrated theologians and philosophers, such as Dr. Balthasar Walther, Abraham Frankenberg, Friedrich Krause, and even the son of Boehme's worst enemy, Richter of Goerlitz, who published eight books containing extracts of Boehme's works.

Boehme's works were translated into different languages, and attracted the attention of Charles I. of England, who, after reading his "Answers to Forty Questions," exclaimed, "God be praised that there are still men in existence who are able to give from their own experience a living testimony of God and His Word." Johannes Sparrow, in the years 1646-1662, produced a translation in English of Boehme's works, and Edward Taylor another during the reign of James II. A third translation was made in 1755 by William Law, and many authors (the great Newton included) are said to have drawn largely from Boehme's works. His prominent disciples, however, and the ones most capable

of grasping his ideas, seem to have been Thomas Bromley (1691) and Jane Leade (died 1703), the founder of the society of Philadelphians (if comprising under that name all persons who have entered a certain stage of development can be called the founding of a society).

Henry Moore, professor at Cambridge, was requested to examine the books of Jacob Boehme, and *to report against them.* He examined them; but his report had turned out differently from what had been expected; for even if he, on account of his own engrafted theologian ideas, was not fully capable to comprehend Jacob Boehme, and misunderstood him in many ways, nevertheless, he pronounced himself in his favour, and said that he who treated Boehme with contempt, could not be otherwise but ignorant and mentally blind; adding that Jacob Boehme had undoubtedly been spiritually wakened for the purpose of correcting those false Christians who believed merely in an external Christ, without regard whether or not they had the Spirit of Christ within themselves.

For the instruction of those who believe that the present may learn a lesson from the experience of the past, we must prominently mention the name of Johann George Gichtel, a pious man and one of the greatest disciples of Boehme, a man of great insight and power.

He was a deep thinker, leading a blameless life. In 1682, he re-published Boehme's writings, and added to them many valuable engravings, with explanations, showing great profundity of thought and spiritual knowledge. By exposing the faults of the clergy, he made them his enemies. He wanted to reform them by force. Several times he was put into prison, and once he was even publicly exposed in the pillory in consequence of his sincerity. He established a society called the "Angelic Brothers," and in which every member was supposed to have actually renounced the world and entered into a state of angelic perfection. These "Angelic Brothers" were to be free from all human imperfections and so situated as not to be pestered with terrestrial cares. They were supposed not to be inclined to marry, and not to do any manual labour; but to live in continual contemplation and prayer, and by penetrating to the centre of good to abolish all evil, so that the wrath of God might be extinguished within the souls of all men, and universal love and harmony prevail everywhere. They were to depose the clergy, and, in their places, to be true priests, after the order of Melchisedec, taking upon themselves the *Karma* of all men and the sin of the world for expiation and redemption. Thus, this otherwise well-meaning man forgot that the organization of an angelic brotherhood would require, above all, the acquisition of angels to constitute its membership. Such angels are not easily to be found, and if they were to be found, they would require no external organization. Nevertheless, Gichtel's society, although being presumably neither angelic nor divinely wise, is said to have done a great deal of good, and Henke, a church historian, writes that they especially were

tolerant, and never condemned any person on account of his belief or opinions, and that they never boasted, but silently accomplished many good works.

The followers of Jacob Boehme were not always left in peace. There will be theological and other bigots as long as ignorance exists in the world. Such persons, incapable of understanding the spirit of Boehme's teachings, imagined them to contain heresies, and, in 1689, Quirinus Kuhlmann, a follower of Boehme, was burned alive at the stake at Moscow, because he had been too free in expressing his opinions regarding the iniquities of the clergy of those times.

All the arguments which the enemies of Jacob Boehme have ever put forward consist merely in the application of vile epithets, such as "Fool! Atheist! Swine! Shoe-patcher! Crank! Hypocrite!" and phrases such as the following:—

"Boehme's sect is truly Devilish, and the vilest excrement of the Devil; it has the father of lies for its origin; the Devil had possession of Boehme, and grunted out of his mouth." (*Johann Trick.*)

"We have no desire to climb up the ladder of dreams created by Boehme. To do so would be to tempt God and lead us down to perdition." (*Delitsch.*)

"The writings of Jacob Boehme contain as many blasphemies as there are lines. They have a fearful odour of shoemaker's pitch and blacking." (*Richter.*)

"The shoemaker is the Antichrist." (*Richter.*)

"We ask who deserves belief? The word of Christ or the prejudiced shoemaker with his dirt?" (*Richter.*)

"The Holy Ghost has anointed Christ with oil, but the villain of a shoemaker has been daubed over with dirt by the devil." (*Richter.*)

"Christ spake about important things; but the shoemaker speaks about things that are vile." (*Richter.*)

"Christ taught publicly; but the shoemaker sits in a corner." (*Richter*).

"Christ used to drink good wine; but shoemakers drink whisky." (*Rev. Gregorius Richter.*)

The above will be sufficient as specimens of the theological arguments of those times. However laughable they may appear at the present time, there was a serious aspect attached to them for Jacob Boehme and his successors. Hobius of Hamburg, a follower of Boehme, had to leave the city for fear of being assassinated by the rabble, whose fury was excited against him by the bigotted parson, Rev. J. Frederic Mayer; and Abraham Hinkelman, from the same cause, died of grief; while Joh. Winkler, a theologian, who had refused to express a contempt for Jacob Boehme, was saved from his persecutors by the protection offered him by the King.

On the other hand, there were many of the more enlightened theologians who stood up in defence of Boehme and his doctrines; foremost of all John

Winkler, John Mathaci, Frederick Brenkling, and Spencer, and especially so, Gottfried Arnold, the author of a history of churches and heretics. The wise can find wisdom in everything, even in the prattle of a child; but the fool sees his own image in everything, and therefore the great historian Mozhof (1688) sees in Jacob Boehme a saint and a sage; while F. T. Adelung, who wrote a book on human folly, denounces him and Theophrastus Paracelsus as fools. The so-called "Rationalists," and the great bulk of the theologians, combined with each other to fight against that which they were unable to understand, while Johann Salomo Samler, a self-thinking man and capable of entering into the spirit of Boehme, calls the writings of Boehme "a fountain of happiness and spiritual knowledge, from which everyone may drink without having the order of his external life disturbed thereby."

Among those who were pre-eminently capable to grasp Jacob Boehme's ideas, we will only mention the great theologian, Frederic Christop Octinger, Pastor Oberlin, and Louis Claude de St. Martin, the "Unknown philosopher," who translated his works into French. Many other persons, whose names are well-known in history, and who had more or less penetrated to the fountain of truth, such as Henry Jung Stelling, Friederich von Hardenberg, Friederich von Schlegel, Novalis, Heinrich Jacobi, Schelling, Goethe, Franz Baadez, Hegel, and many others might be named; but all this proves nothing. The value of the truth cannot be made to depend on the recommendation or certificate of any person, however great an authority he may be; it is beyond all praise. The reason why men have so much difficulty in seeing the truth is because it is so simple that even a child can behold it; but the minds of the worldly-wise are complicated, and they seek for complexedness in the truth. Let, therefore, those who wish to enter the spirit of the doctrines of Jacob Boehme dismiss their own prejudices, and open their eyes to the light. Those who are able to see it will see it; while to those whose eyes are closed, the writings of Jacob Boehme will be a sealed book, and it will be advisable for them to first learn the lesson taught by terrestrial Life, before they attempt to judge about the mysteries of the Life in the Spirit of God.

The writings of Jacob Boehme are all in accordance with, and based upon, the statements contained in the Christian Bible, and this circumstance will at once prove to be an obstacle in the way of those who have no understanding for the internal meaning of the Bible accounts, and may frighten them away from giving any attention to his works. The Bible, which, in an external sense, was formerly credulously believed and accepted by the pious and ignorant, is now universally disbelieved and laughed at by the "enlightened" portions of rationalistic humanity; and very naturall so, because the rationalistic specimens of mankind are not enlightened enough to see the delicious fruit within the indigestible shell; they do not know that behind these tales, full of absurdity, there is hidden more wisdom than in all the philosophical books of the world.

They know nothing about the inner life, the *Soul-life* of this world, and that the personalities, which are as dramatic actors introduced to us in the Bible, represent actual living and conscious powers, which may or may not have become objectified and represented in terrestrial forms as on the terrestrial plane. If, departing from the pseudo-scientific standpoint, which regards the world as being made up of a conglomeration of self-existent, individual entities, we look at the world, and especially at our solar system, as being unity, indivisible in its essential nature, but manifesting itself in a multitude of appearances and forms of life, the history of the Bible will cease to appear to us as the history of persons that lived in olden times, and whose lives and adventures can have no serious interest for us at the present time; but the history of the evolution as contained in the Bible will be understood to mean the history of the evolution of Man—*i.e.*, *Adam*, the king of the earth, whose body is as great as our solar system; the history of the universal Man, wherein we all exist; who has become material and degraded; but was again redeemed and spiritualized by the awakening within him of the immortal life and light of the Christ.

When or at what time this descent of divine Logos took place; at what time or where the last *Avatar* appeared who redeemed mankind, is a question which may be left to the decision of the historian and theologian; to me it is sufficient to know that there is a divine element in humanity, by means of which humanity may be redeemed from materialism and ignorance and be bought to realize again her originally divine state. Moreover, each human individual constitutes for itself a little world wherein are contained all the powers, principles, and essences that are said to exist in the great world, the solar system wherein we live. In each of these little worlds the great work of redemption which is described in the Bible as having taken place in the great world is continually going on. For ever the divine Spirit descends into the depths of matter within our corporeal being, and, by the power of light and love of Christ within the soul, overcomes the lurid fire of the wrathful will within for the purpose of re-establishing in man the divine image of God. For ever the Christ is born between the animal elements in the constitution of man, teaching the intellectual powers therein; crucified on the cross, in the centre of the four elements and resurrected in those who do not resist the process of their own regeneration, whereby they may attain life in the Christ. It is a process eternally repeating itself; but that in regard to our world, it had a beginning in time, as it has a timely beginning in every individual being upon the earth, seems to be self evident, for if "Adam had never fallen in sin"—that is to say, if the universal consciousness constituting the foundation of our solar system had never sunk into a material state—there would have been no occasion for redeeming it by awaking within it a consciousness of a higher kind; neither can it be supposed that the world is perfect now, and has always been and remained perfect

because we see that it is not perfect, and if it were so, the work of evolution would be useless and come to an end.

This work of evolution and redemption is going on continually everywhere. Downwards shines the light of the sun and upwards spring the fountains that come gushing from the womb of the earth. Thus the light of the spirit comes from the sun of divine wisdom, the sacred Trinity of Will and Thought and its manifestation; and from the depths of the human heart up-wells the light of love, overruling the arguments of the intellect that has been misguided by external appearances. The seed is put into the earth, not for the purpose of finding its final object in enjoying itself in the earth, but to gradually die and become transformed while it lives; to die as a seed, while developing into a plant, whose body is raised out of the dark earth into the light and air, and whose form bears no trace of the original form of the seed; nor has the seed been put into the ground to die and to rot before becoming a plant. Thus the spiritual regeneration of man is to take place now, and while he lives in the body, and not after that body which is necessary for such a transformation to take place has died, and is eaten up by the worms.

When the seed ceases to be a seed, it becomes a plant. When man, the medium between an intellectual animal and a god, ceases to be such an animal, he becomes a god. This takes place when the universal God, the Christ, begins to live in him. Then the illusions end, and the interior truth becomes revealed. Not in books, nor in opinions, nor in the vagaries of metaphysical speculations; but in the living Truth itself is the Light to be found.

Thus prepared, we may take up the study of Boehme's works.

He himself says in the introduction to one of his books as follows:—

"*God-loving reader!* If it is your earnest and serious will and desire to devote yourself to that which is divine and eternal, the reading of this book will be very useful to you; but if you are not fully determined to enter the way of holiness, it would be better for you to let alone the sacred names of God, wherein his supreme sanctity is invoked; because the wrath of God may become ignited within your soul. This book is written only for those who desire to be sanctified and united with the supreme power from which they have originated. Such persons will understand the true meaning of the words contained therein, and they will also recognize the source from which these thoughts have come."

One of the most enlightened critics of Jacob Boehme says, in regard to his book on divine mysteries:—

"This book is a treasure-box wherein all wisdom has been hidden from the eyes of the fool; but to the children of light it is always open. No one will clearly understand it unless he has the key necessary for that purpose, and that key is the Holy Ghost. He who is in possession of that key will be able to open the door and to enter to see the mysteries of Divinity; divine magic, angelic cabala, and natural philosophy. That key opens the door of divinity,

and, like a lightning flash, it illuminates the darkness of material conditions, for its imperishable spirit is contained within all things. This spirit and no other can teach the soul of man from what depths the truths contained in this book have originated, for the purpose of glorifying the Divinity in nature in man."

And, again, he says:—

"The spirit of man is rooted in God; the soul of man in the angelic world. The spirit is divine, the soul angelic. The body of man is rooted in the material plane; it is of an earthly nature. The pure body is a *Salt;* the soul a *Fire;* the spirit is *Light.* Spirit and soul have been eternally in God and breathed by God into a pure body. This pure body is a precious treasure, hidden within the rock. It is contained in matter doomed to perish; but it is neither material nor mortal itself. It is the immortal body spoken of by St. Paul. These things are mysterious, sealed with the seal of the spirit, and he who desires to know them must be in possession of the spirit of God. It is this spirit that illuminates those minds who are His own, and wherever it is to be found, there will the *eagles*—the souls and the spirits—collect. No animal man, living according to his sensual attractions and animal reasoning, will understand it; because it is above the reach of the senses and above the reach of the semi-animal intellect; it belongs to the holy mountain of God, and the animal touching that mountain must die. Even the sanctified soul rising up to that mountain must bare her feet and leave behind that which is attached to her as a creature. She must forget her personality, and not know whether she is in or out of the body. God knows it. These things are sacred. They are written for children; to animals we have nothing to say."

Let, then, the reader *pray;* not with his mouth nor with mere words, but with his spirit—that is to say, let him open his heart to the influence of the power of God, and by the power of the Divine Will rise up to that universal realm of Light from which Jacob Boehme received his illuminations. It is the realm of the living *Word* which was in the beginning, and by whose power the world was created; the Christ that continually whispers consolation to the despairing and dying soul; the heart and centre of God, of which the material sun that fills our terrestrial world with light and life is merely a symbol, an outward representation. Then will we see the internal world filled with a superior and living light, incomparably superior to that of the physical world, and in that world we shall find God and the Christ and the holy Spirit of Truth revealed, together with all the angels and mysteries; truly and satisfactorily beyond the possibility of being disputed away; because we shall not then need to be taught by mere letters or words, but by the truth itself, and learn what it is, and not what it appeared to be to another, because we shall then ourselves be one with the Truth and know it by the knowledge of self.

In the year 1705, the saintly Gichtel wrote: "Whoever in our time wishes

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to bring forth anything fundamental and imperishable, must borrow it from Boehme. Boehme's writings are a gift of God, and, therefore, not every kind of reason can apprehend them; therefore, you must not be satisfied with mere reading and rational speculation, but beseech God to give you His Holy Spirit, that shall lead you into all truth."

These prophetic words, quoted in Mrs. A. J. Penny's excellent essay on the way how to study Jacob Boehme's writings, have been fully verified by the succeeding events; for every great philosopher that has come before the public since that time seems to have received his inspiration from Boehme's books. Even the great Arthur Schopenhauer, one of the most admired modern philosophers, whose works are praised by many who would treat with contempt the works of Boehme, which they have never studied, was a follower of Boehme, and his writings are fundamentally nothing but an exposition of Boehme's doctrines from the point of view of Mr. Schopenhauer, who misunderstood Boehme in many respects. Schopenhauer likewise says about Schelling's works:—

"They are almost nothing except a remodelling of Jacob Boehme's 'Mysterium Magnum,' in which almost every sentence of Hegel's book is represented. But why are in Hegel's writings the same figures and forms insupportable and ridiculous to me, which in Boehme's works fill me with admiration and awe? It is because in Boehme's writings the recognition of eternal truth speaks from every page; whilst Schelling takes from him what he is able to grasp. He uses the same figures of speech; but he evidently mistakes the shell for the fruit, or at least, he does not know how to separate them from each other." (*Handschriften, Nachlass*, page 261).

It would be too tedious to produce a collection of what the various modern philosophers in different nations have said about the writings of Jacob Boehme; the only way to form a correct estimate about him is to enter into his spirit and to see as he did. We will, therefore, in conclusion, merely quote the words of Claude de Saint Martin: "I am not young, being now near my fiftieth year; nevertheless, I have begun to learn German merely for the purpose of reading this incomparable author." . . . . "I am not worthy to open the shoestrings of this wonderful man, whom I regard as the greatest light that has ever appeared upon the earth, second only to Him who was the Light itself." . . . . "I advise you by all means to throw yourself in this abyss of knowledge of the most profoundest of all truths." . . . . "I find in his works such a profundity and exaltation of thought and such a simple and delicious nutriment, that I would consider it a waste of time to seek for such things in any other place." (*Letters to Kirchberger.*)

# SPIRITUALITY.

In the conventional religious speech, the word "spirituality" means "a devotional habit of mind," or "an aspiration after Divine things." Theosophy gives it a far fuller and more extensive signification. It, of course, includes therein that of yearning after "God," for this is the ighest and noblest reach of the human soul; but it also makes it to comprehend all faculty of understanding super-sensuous truth, all interest in the illimitable sphere outside the range of our physical senses—those things which, as the Christian Adept, Paul, said, "being not seen, are eternal."

We perceive this the better when we think out the extent to which our conception of the realities of life has been pushed by the ever-present influence of our material bodies. Their needs in maintenance and comfort, their demands for pleasure and recreation, their function—through the five senses—in opening to us whatever knowledge we gain of the surrounding world, their connecting us in families, social interests, and vital activities, all unite in ensuring predominance to them in thought. More than this, our inability to look into other realms of existence, our incapacity to sense unmaterial facts in any way so literal as when we "see" a landscape or a fellow-man, gives an objectiveness to the material which we perforce consider reality. The vividness of external things, seen distinctly and spontaneously, contrasts with the dimness of internal visions, perceived vaguely and with effort. So to us the body is the real "I," the "I" which hungers and thirsts, wearies and pains, enjoys and plans, finally dies; and its earthly home is the real world, to be followed perhaps by another adapted to our then mutilated and denuded selves. So fixed is the idea of the body as a necessary element in the composite, triple nature of man, that the Christian doctrine of the Resurrection is to millions the assurance that they are not to be left permanently in the cheerless land of spirit, but are to regain their missing third, and the "Queen of Feasts," Easter, convinces them of an immortality which, without a resurrected body, would be more than doubtful and less than desirable!

One consequence of our mode of thought is that our attitude towards the unseen is always of looking upward, and looking upward with strain. Spiritual things are far away, high above our heads on other planes, and to near them and feel them we must coerce the shrinking muscles into unfamiliar act. Indeed, no better proof of their little verity for us, as compared with that of material objects, can be found than our use towards them of the word "faith," which implies that, however sure we may be of the existence of matter, that of spirit can be only a subject of trust!

Theosophy's cardinal principle is a complete reversal of this position. Instead of taking its stand on the physical world as the permanent view-point, and thence looking off to the spiritual as a changeful, uncertain region, it stations itself in the spiritual world as the real, the enduring, and the sure, and from there contemplates the physical as mutable, transient, and illusive. And surely this is in conformity to fact. Earthly objects are evidently in a state of flux. Not one remains the same for two consecutive hours, nay moments. Everything is disintegrating and re-combining in other forms; the continents, the cities, the molecules, are perpetually altering; the very bodies which we consider "I," the very organs through which we perceive the external world and through which comes to us our conviction of its durability, undergo atomic change each instant that we live. If neither the organs perceiving, nor the objects perceived, remain the same for a single hour, what possible stability have they as a view-point for existence?

But none of this can be true of the realm of spirit. Reason teaches that, as we ascend from the region of gross matter, passing upward through the zones of the less gross, the semi-material, the more and more ethereal, to the home of pure spirit, we part steadily from all the conditions which induce change, and meet ever more fully with the permanent and the real. Its interest, too, is correspondingly finer. Animal desires and needs are left behind, and the expanding nature rises past even the intellectual, psychic, and emotional realms till it reaches the level of spiritual being, where truth is intuitively seen and right intuitively felt. As the pursuits of a physicist are incomparably superior to those of a day labourer, so, it is evident, must those of a free spirit be to those of the physicist.

But of even deeper value to the human heart is the fact that recession from the material is approach to true happiness. The source of pain is in change. Hardly has a pleasure been attained than the shifting elements of life undermine it, and it falls. Instability is the moan of the moralist, and he finds in it the cause of the desolating sorrows and bereavements of this world. These evils must, of course, diminish as we recede from the sphere of their conditions, and must die out as we near the realm of reality. Happiness, therefore, is least sure when it depends most on any object or content in material existence, and gains permanency as it is rooted in the world of the unseen, the enduring. In fact, the whole matter may be thus summed up—that the richest, the most lasting, the happiest quality of life is possible only as the life is detached from bodily dependency and transferred to a plane above the range of matter.

This seems unpractical, perhaps visionary. Why? Because we are still clinging to the notion of the material as the real and the spiritual as the unreal. But let us reverse the conception. Let us assume—if we do

not already *know* it—that each thing, function, process in this surrounding world of substance is a manifestation in density of a corresponding idea in the unseen sphere of spirit. It of course follows that the former, because of inevitable limitations, must be imperfect, changeful, and restricted. But it also follows that, such limitations not existing, the latter may be complete, enduring, and boundless. Apply this to our percipient organs. The eye, the ear, etc., should have a super-sensuous analogue, of which they are the physical representations. We infer, therefore, to the human spirit a faculty of sight and hearing on the plane whereto it belongs. Further, as cultivation is the law to perfectness in the former, even more, by analogy, must it be to the latter. Still further, if the results from scientific use of the former are both marvellous and demonstrable, in even greater degree must this be true of the latter. And thus we reach the conclusion that spiritual senses are not less real than bodily, not less susceptible to training, even more rich in proved attainment.

Now what is the law of the change of spirituality, expressed in contrast of both fact and method? Col. H. S. Olcott, President-Founder of the Theosophical Society, has thus admirably stated it: "Mankind usually receive a thousand impressions through the senses to one through the spiritual nature. Adeptship means *reversing* the proportion." In other words, the spiritual world bears the relation to the perfected man that the material world does to the rudimentary man.

But how are we rudimentary men to become perfected men? We cannot ignore facts in existence and the conditions of it, nor can we essay to live as if now Adepts. By no means. But we can recognize other and larger facts in existence, and we can begin the training which men now Adepts began when like ourselves. Here are some of the successive steps.

1st. *We can give reality to the conception that all physical matters are mutable and illusive, and that permanency is to be found in the realm of the physically unseen.* This conception must first be clearly formed. Reality is imparted to it by acting upon it. A man may make real the spiritual world by transferring to it his thoughts, his meditations, his aspirations, his interests, and his efforts. As he thinks upon it and strives after it, it discloses itself as truly to his spiritual perceptions as does this earth to the student of physics.

2nd. *We can affiliate ourselves intellectually and morally with the principles of the unseen world.* The present usual intellectual attitude of incredulity towards all fact which seems strange or which is intangible may be overcome, and the axiom that "there are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamed of in our philosophy" be digested. The possibility of cosmic, and terrestrial, and individual forces playing ever around and in us then becomes plausible. Coupled with this may be a like recognition of the unbending moral powers, which ensure the triumph of good, and of

sweetness, and of light, giving certain victory to truth and honour, and the doctrine of human fraternity as a consequence of human origin from the Divine. No lasting benefit can come from that which is not lasting, and only good lasts.

3rd. *We can substitute duty for self-interest as the motive power in life.* The subordination of selfish wishes to the standard of right and of universal claims soon moderates the egotism which bars out spiritual light. More than this, it brings us into harmony with this great law of Oneness which sweeps throughout the universe, and thus fits us for perceiving and co-operating with the ends of our own being. When a man invariably does what he *ought* to do, and not merely what he would *like* to do, he has lost his greatest disqualification for true spirituality,

4th. *We may acquire the power of fixedness in thought.* This is an indispensable step in the progressive course. Our thought now is discursive, aimless, discontinuous. The mind escapes the reins of the will, and wanders from topic to topic, seizing none and exhausting none. To recover control, to retain it, to enforce it, is one of the hardest trials to a beginner. Yet till the power of thought is gained, till wandering is checked and concentration easy, no one can peer into his own being, learn the mysteries of his nature and his desires, understand how *real* is the unseen within. The soul must master the mind which is its instrument.

5th. *We may endeavour to develop these perceptive organs of the spirit, now dormant, which are analogous to those of the physical body.* This does not mean clairaudience, or clairvoyance, or any gifts of the psychic plane. Nor does it mean mere intelligence or conscience. It means rather a receptiveness, a responsiveness to supersensuous truth, to truth of and from supersensuous realms, which gradually awakens those organs to their functions and enables them to attract more, perceive more, and receive more. It is a process hardly stateable in language, and only verifiable through experience, but it is a process which everyone may begin if sincere and continue if devoted, and its results are indicated in the words of Col. Olcott.

Spirituality is not, then, a vague aspiration after the Divine; nor is it that sentimental and unpractical quality of character which scoffers stigmatize as "goody-goody." The very same reasons which evoke respect for the coarse man who is educating himself into love and appreciation and practice of refinement, apply to him who is striving for emancipation from the belittling, benumbing effects of purely material interests and habits. An eagle chained in a barnyard may symbolize our ordinary selves; an eagle soaring into the sunlight and winging its way among mountain peaks, the spirit of man, vivified, illuminated, FREE!

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# LET US BE PRACTICAL.

By ANNIE WOLF (EM'LY).

# A GLIMPSE INTO THEOSOPHY.

# PERSONALITIES.

# WHAT IS THEOSOPHY?

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# LET US BE PRACTICAL.

My friends, let us be practical. I say I shall touch at present only upon the practical ethics of Theosophy, and in a very simple, colloquial style.

My general experience among the classes interested in and leaning on Theosophy, mental science, Christian scienoe, mind healing—and, indeed, all students of psychics, and of those silent and invisible forces in Nature which move with a solemn stillness, and yet which are invincible—is that they are too dreamy, too theoretical, too vague, and too hysterical to meet the trials of this commonplace, workaday life.

Many of us who call ourselves Theosophists proceed to repeat the fundamental teachings of this science-religion without ever troubling ourselves to sift them to the bottom of their meaning, or satisfying ourselves that we apply them to our own lives.

I recall a few cases which illustrate this point, and I may safely relate them as convincing proof of what I have said.

The first is of a lady who believed herself a devoted Theosophist; so did others. But, when a marplot of a dressmaker failed to deliver her new gown, while she waited to don it for a dinner party, her impatience grew to such a fume that it boiled over in a flood of petulant tears, while she threw herself face downwards on a couch. Now, if a woman's Theosophy, superior will, Divine wisdom, or whatever you call it, does not serve her at times of such frivolous disappointment, it is not worth much.

The second is of a lady who became enamoured of Mental Science; enamoured, mark you. For the time being she was enraptured with the group of ideas represented under this title, as a child is with a new doll, or a suitor with a fresh sweetheart. These subjecis are not matters for amorous jugglery. They are to live by, to study as a science, and to rest on as a companion in whom you feel a deeper confidence and higher solace day by day. She was a gifted elocutionist; coughs, colds, and sore throats had been her mortal dread and worst enemies. After her first few lessons in Mental Science, she boldly and persistently denied the existence of influenza or catarrh, and believed this positive attitude of mind a bulwark against the inheritance of generations and the indiscreet habits of years. But the colds continued to come, crowding thick and fast upon her, making her so hoarse she could hardly speak, while she bravely fired off her ammunition of denials from behind a great fortress of catarrh. Do you not think she would have better shown divine wisdom by keeping out of draughts, changing wet stockings for dry ones, and wearing sufficient clothing? I do.

One more illustration and I have done. Not long since I was regretting the existence in life of those little, far-away, desolate islands, where a seeming fate hurls us, and then leaves us to stand all alone, while we feel the ground slipping away from under our feet, a waste of dark waters around us, and no human help in sight. A Theosophic brother turned on me, and upbraided me severely for not believing in Universal brotherhood. It was useless for me to protest. By-and-by, an emergency came into my life; I needed twenty-five dollars instantly to save a near friend from disaster. It was five o'clock in the afternoon, and I sought the Theosophic brother's aid, at his place of business, and it is a large importing house. I explained the grievous circumstances, and that my bank was closed. He simply replied, "I am sorry I can't help you; but you are unnecessarily excited. I guess you can bridge over your worst anticipations to-night. It's not so long to wait until the bank opens in the morning." Later on a question of moment came up, relative to matters in which we both had an interest. Certain movements of my own had been sat upon in uncharitable judgment by a dozen critics. I had not been present at the assembly, so he wrote me ten pages of gossipy scurrility, trusting "that in spirit life I had advanced beyond the world's superficial judgment"; and signed himself "a loyal, sincere, and faithful friend." Now, this is an instance of how beautiful Universal brotherhood may be talked most beautifully. But in this sordid, selfish world cannot each one of us try to form the nucleus of a Universal Brotherhood by practising a material and spiritual philanthropy in our own little circle? If we are going to drift into the desperate and deplorable cant about our existing as *perfect* beings, emanating from the Divine, and therefore incapable of sickness, sorrow, strife, and sin; if we are going to audaciously assert that we, to-day, are living in the harmony of a Universal Brotherhood; if we are going to occupy our time straining our spiritual eyes after astral bodies, the joys of Devachan, and the luminous tableaux of Nirvana; if we are going to find happiness and solace in these thoughts alone—we may as well return to the old and misty creeds of pulpit orthodoxy.

That we are still only sons of God, and not gods unto men, is proved by the fact that we have not shaken off our old condition of sickness, sorrow, strife, and sin. If we were living to-day a practical Universal Brotherhood, we would not have an Alaska Street, Philadelphia; a Five Points, New York; a Seven Dials, London, with their struggling, sinning, squalid, starving populations. If we were all awake spiritually, we would gaze clearly, confidently, fearlessly, and without effort on the astral phenomena crowding the very atmosphere about us; and until the psychic vision is completely unembarrassed, it is as useless to sit in wonder-gazing expectation, as to try to read the headlines of the morning press, while the fleshly tissues of the eyelids are still sealed in slumber.

The question is, What is Theosophy? Well, Webster and Worcester define it as divine wisdom. But it is something more. Theosophy appears

to me to be that form of philosophy that links God and nature in man; a human pantheism. If God and nature be linked in man as the highest expression of divine power, our work begins with ourselves—that is, the attainment of human perfection through personal effort.

What we want is not to talk Theosophy, but to live it. Live it as the man Jesus did, walking in the ways of eternal truth, from which he was surnamed Christos.

If Theosophy is to serve any purpose in elevating the *alter ego*,—if Theosophy is to teach man the Divine Wisdom, which he may achieve along lines of worldly practice and experience; and so, ultimately, lift him on to new heights of manhood—then the very beginnings of it are rooted in laws which may apply to the homely worries of everyday life, and their *practical* remedy.

Do not let us regard the argument for the study of cosmogony and the essential nature of man, which has come to us under the name of Theosophy, merely as a beautiful poetical picture, not much more than a charming dream of what might be in some intangible state of existence, and in an indefinite, nameless somewhere, quite out of mortal reach.

Theosophic life is not a mere theoretical speculation. It is neither a species of clap-trap mysticism, nor the dreary scheme of visionary philosophers, with the vain hope of delivering themselves from the evils and troubles of life, from all activity, self-consciousness, and personal existence.

The exactions of the Theosophic life—the *life*, I say—are real. It demands the constant repression of the gross animal passions; the subordination of fleshy desires and tempers to the highest spiritual behests, the eradication of selfishness, the fostering of broad, generous sympathies toward our fellow-man, the *cheerful* performance of the duty that lies nearest to us. The Theosophic life requires pure thoughts, high and holy ideals for the inner man; teaches the love of right for righteousness sake; it distinguishes between good and evil by the light that shines within; and it develops the spiritual essence of man by meditation.

You see, it is an arduous, patient, uphill journey that each one must climb for himself; and only by strength of will and grace of holiness may we poor mortal pilgrims hope to attain final glory.

There is no shifting responsibilities, no shirking to-morrow's result of to-day's action (whether it be good or evil); there are no vicarious atonements. If we would be sound in soul, we must be our own spiritual surgeon, and lay the axe to the root of the fungus growth of sin, just as the surgeon of the body lays the scalpel to the cancer on the human breast; and alone, must the pain be borne.

The process of the practical Theosophic life is entirely within ourselves, the motive, the effort, the consequences being distinctly personal.

To this end reflection is necessary. First of all, let us look into ourselves

with clear, courageous, impartial eyes. Let us turn the spirtual sight in upon our own souls, and note what we see there. Let us see how much sound truth, ready to receive the fruitful pollen of love, and how much festering falsehood occupies the chalice of our hearts. For truth is fortitude, it is liberty, it is virtue, it is daring, it is charity, it is generosity. And these are the soul's richest acquisitions. Falsehood is a whole host of foemen.

Let us go into battle with ourselves. Let us crush out envy, hatred, malice, and spite; let us conquer false pride of place and mistaken ambitions; let us live away from and above small tempers, narrow judgments, and the trivial strifes of the mortal man. For all these are our worst enemies. Let us speak encouraging words, and let us think generous thoughts of others; let us value our neighbour for his intrinsic merits; let us not relegate him to the Siberia of indecent personages because Sally Smith or Jenny Jones rolls her eyeballs clear under their lids at the mention of his name, and implies all kinds of unpronounceable things.

When those captious, sullen, irrascible days come which come to all of us, let us close our teeth *hard* on our tongues, rather than pain the unoffending people around us. Let us strive to give practical help to each other. But let us not plume ourselves upon it, nor boast of it. Many of us have the habit of saying, "I want to help my neighbour, she *needs* me; I see where I can do her a real service." This is a worthy feeling; but let us first take the mote out of our own eye that we may see more clearly to take it from that of our brother. The Bible tells us this, and I find it a book of sound wisdom and practical advice.

There is another snag to be avoided in this apt-to-be-delusive feeling about assisting others. Perhaps deep down, and away off in an obscure corner of your heart, lies the germ of selfishness, and your attentions to your friend may be only a stepping-stone. Let us not humbug ourselves.

Let us not spend time being sorry for ourselves. All forms of self-pity enervate the heart of man. Let us face our trials calmly and with resolution of action, placing our *only choice* in self-reliance.

If you fail in an undertaking, blame no man. The cause of failure is a deficiency in yourself. Remember the law of the survival of the fittest. All our blunders and suffering in life are the result of our own ignorance or wilful error. For the law of Karma is the law of life. What ye sow, that shall ye also reap. Byron fully illustrates this order of things when he says, "Love and liquor are both ecstasies, after one the heartache, and after the other the headache." If you plant thistle seed, are you very surprised if strawberries do not grow? And if you lead a profligate, indolent life, should you be greatly *amazed* if honour and acclaim do not single you out.

Each one is positively the Truth, the Light, and the Way unto himself. Each one of us is an individual unit (a fragment of the great Whole) travelling over the *mountain paths* of life, *en route* to the Golden Summit. The ways are

steep and narrow; they are entangled with thorns and thickets, and brambles, and briars which smart and lacerate. And when we meet a great jagged boulder, which fate seemed to have rolled as a test of strength into our pathway, let us not stand kicking against it, wounding ourselves; it is as useless as when the gentle sea-mist endeavours to caress the cruel rocks which tear the phantom lover to shreds. Let us not pause in despair before these boulders, and so deter our own progress. Our object is to surmount the obstacle. Climb over it; walk round it; plough through it; only let us be sure we get it behind us in this journey of life. Sometimes we come to forks in the road; if we be perplexed, let us not be impatient, and whine and fret; we only exhaust spiritual vitality in this way. (Nothing was ever gained by crying. If you cry for the moon, you won't even get a star.) Now is the time to pause and look within. Focus your soul's sight; and lo! out of the gloom and mists of doubt, the illuminated finger-board will appear. We may be only well on our way again, when, behold! we shall find ourselves in a *cul-de-sac*. Come up, bump! into a dark corner from which, for the moment, there is no visible egress. Great, black, stony walls rise before and around us; again our way is obstructed, our progress cut off. Not one ray shines above that seeming impassable structure of adamant. Stand and pause. Possess your soul in peace; stand and pause, I say. You are not losing time, you are only gaining strength and breath, and when the light shall flash suddenly—as it is sure to—then is the time to scale that wall. Put that behind you, too.

Then, let us not look backward over the avenues we have trod. Remember, the guiding star is before us, and we have only to keep our eyes fastened on it in our journey toward the higher heights. Let us keep out of the past; it is damp and gloomy; it is haunted by the ghastly shadows of wasted ambitions, smouldering tombs of expired hopes, God-like aspirations, and holy ideals covered with the slime of the stagnant waters which once nourished their life; watch-fires of love, which leapt and glowed with fervency, now a dead, blackened, charred heap of ashen dust. Are these not sights fit to transform any one of us into a monument of brine? Yes, and they scatter the road which lies behind every man and woman in the world to-day. Then, let us not look backward!

So when I say reflect, meditate; I mean look inward, not backward.

And let us act. Action is effort, action is growth. Growth is divine pain; all nature travails and groans in growth. Remember, we never stand still; if we do not endeavour to advance, we retrograde. For, feelings which end in themselves and do not express themselves by fulfilling a function, leave us feeble and sickly in character, debilitated in mind and soul. Believe me, spiritual excellence and the scheme for human perfection does not come to any of us in a windfall. Whatever measure of success we may obtain in Theosophic growth is won by unflagging toil and pre-eminent psychic endowments.

Don't be too confident of yourself. Salvation is wrought out in fear and trembling. Then, seek out the truth; there is no goal higher than the truth. But the search is not without its trials; and there are few who are fitted by temperament and research to lift the veil of Isis.

Spirituality is only possible of development by retiring within oneself, where lies the higher world of thought and sympathy and instructive culture. The unfoldment of this ineffable life and its marvellous lessons are of gradual growth, but they are everlasting. Spirituality is the culture that issues from discipline, and the courage that springs from the brow of pain, and dares *all dangers.*

So, we are again brought face to face with the bald fact that the *Theosophic life* means unshrinking, incessant, untiring desire combined with efficient exercise. Prayer in operation; prayer in operation carried through every moment of our waking day, every second of our sleeping hours.

You say this is impossible. I say it is not. You will say it is *hard work*, Yes. But practical Theosophy was not made for lazy people.

When you once come to realize that prayer in operation means only to work for the love of your work, it will not be so difficult. Whatsoever your calling may be, lofty or humble, whether it be to preserve human life or carry a hod; whether you are making the thought of future generations, *or washing dishes*, perform your duty to the *utmost measure* of your ability; to the glory and satisfaction of *your own highest self.* There is no such thing as accomplishing great results without work, and spirituality makes no apology for indolence.

Remember,

"The spark divine dwells in thee; let it grow.
That which the upreaching spirit can achieve
The grand and all creative forces know;
They will assist and strengthen, as the light
Lifts up the acorn to the oak tree's height.
Thou hast but to resolve, and lo! God's whole
Great universe shall fortify thy soul."

—ANNIE WOLF (EM'LY).

# A GLIMPSE INTO THEOSOPHY.

"It is the fashion to believe in ghosts." Little straws show which way the wind blows, and the casual remark here quoted is an indication of the widely-increasing curiosity in the direction of the so-called *supernatural*. Materialism is producing its inevitable reaction towards spirituality; a reaction which takes various directions with different minds. Spiritualism attracts some —the study of the old writings of alchemists and astrologers others—and perhaps a larger number are drawn to Eastern philosophy, which really supplies most of the keys needed to any study which goes deeper than the mere surface of things.

Waves of thought creep over races and nations in a regular order—and, looking back, one may see at intervals of about one hundred years the same turning towards spiritual development after a long growth in a material direction. Mesmer and Cagliostro, in the eighteenth century, and the old witchcraft trials in the sevententh century show the same curious tendency, and now even more strongly we may see it, creeping into every form of thought and teaching, and reaching all minds according to the way in which each can be affected by it. This persistent and ever-recurring attempt to explore the unknown—this vague yearning after the infinite, has its place in nearly every human soul, and to the more advanced souls in each succeeding age this has been no vague yearning merely, but a splendid reality, a living embodiment of eternal truths called by various names. Theosophia—wisdom of God—Wisdom Religion.

Here it has been, here it will be, ever ready and waiting for men to see and use, but those who need this wisdom must seek it, and only when men have come to that blank wall where ends all purely materialistic search, when they have realized their own emptiness of satisfaction—then they turn with the empty hands and heart into which wisdom will be surely put. All forms of religious belief are based upon certain great truths, as old as mankind. These relate to man's nature and his attitude with regard to the source of his being.

Probe every form of religious belief to its inmost heart and there will be found the truth, alike in each one, from which the diverging lines of thought have grown. The materialistic tendency of modern thought is one of the chief causes of the numerous and various sects which from time to time detach themselves from the parent stem, their mother church, and try to grow and flourish by themselves. Their reason for breaking away from the larger body is usually one of denial of some doctrine, and not a fresh assertion of a truth; they separate because they wish to limit, not because they desire to extend

their former boundaries. All materialism tends to limit and define, to bring human reason to bear upon every subject and every thought. This gradual narrowing down inevitably produces a withering and decay, the lopped-off branches cannot grow apart from the parent stem, they keep a certain amount of vitality, which lingers on for some time, but the detached branch is doomed, for it has been cut away from the roots and the source of nourishment. And what is thus true of sects is true of individuals. Each one with this tendency to think and reason everything out from a purely exoteric point of view, detaches himself from the root-ideas—the great underlying truths, which he has lost sight of in his endeavour to reason about externals. This mental attitude is so general, so widespread, that it is beginning to produce the inevitable result—the reaction towards a more spiritual growth—a struggle in a totally opposite direction.

The power to retrace one's steps is not given to everyone, and for most people, the only way is to approach the subject from a different point of view, or we might say, open another door into the light of truth. No new truth is required, all that we want is there, only hidden under a good deal of the dust and dross of human thought and expression; or rather, we ourselves have accumulated all this dust and dross in front of one of our doors into the light, and because we cannot see that this heap is of our own making and must be cleared by our own effort, we must needs try another of the ways into the light. This seeking into the heart of any system of religious belief can in no sense be called an endeavour to create a *new* religious system; it is, as regards the religion, the same as educating a child, drawing out and developing the latent powers—helping the hidden soul to bud and blossom and bear fruit. Every form of religious belief has this soul, more or less overlaid with the crust of human materialism, as the soul is weighted and bound with chains of matter, and one of the chief objects of Theosophy is to help the growth of this soul in religion, so that, by its development, it shall throw off whatever of human error had accumulated upon and hidden the Divine truth. All, great religious reforms have been accomplished in the same way—from within outwards—no other way is possible. Just as each individual soul works from within outwards, so also must each individual system of belief work from within outwards. Therefore, one of the principal aims of Theosophy is to lead each one, no matter what his creed, to look into the heart of that creed and find the truth and beauty that lie within it, casting off whatever external crust may be necessary to the clearer perception of, and the enlarged faith in, that creed.

Theosophy is not a new religion. There can be no such thing. It brings new light, new enthusiasm, new zeal, new faith; but only to concentrate all these upon the old eternal Divine heart in the old religion.

Theosophy is not, in any sense, antagonistic to the Christianity taught by Christ. It is at war with the shams and hypocrisy and heathen selfishness

which so often rule the lives of those who have the Master's word on their lips, but whose hearts are far from Him.

Much of modern Christianity may be compared to a jewel hidden in a tarnished casket, which few are willing or able to unlock. There is the jewel shining radiantly as ever, but the casket is dimmed and soiled with human error and selfishness, men have forgotten that it may be opened, some have thrown away the key, others say it is not meet to look at the jewel, others deny that any jewel is there; some there are whose faith wavers, and to whom a key, and one glimpse at the Divine light hidden within the casket, would be the commencement of their progress to higher things and firmer faith, and to these Theosophy especially appeals. It gives no fresh jewel, no new casket, but a key to open the old one. Where in this can be found antagonism to, and denial and destruction of, popular beliefs and doctrines?

Theosophy meets and answers some of the difficulties of earnest seekers after truth, who have had none but the outside forms presented to them, and who have failed to see the inner meaning lying hidden in the forms. They feel the difference between the theory and practice of religion; they see the perfunctory performance of religious duties absolutely separated from the spirit which should animate them; they see rules of life and conduct, framed in accordance with the highest ideals, absolutely disregarded and disobeyed, and those who attempt to follow them lightly scorned as "unpractical" and "Quixotic." Then they rebel against the form, thinking that alone is to blame; and so quarrelling with externals, cut themselves off from the possibility of grasping the spirit which is still in the form, waiting to be called forth by the one who can see and feel it, and who is ready and willing to take both spirit and form, and make them the means of living a new life.

So any system of philosophy or religion which draws out and makes more clear and perceptible the spirit which animates it, should be welcomed by the seeker after truth, who has in his blind endeavours pushed aside the very truth he was seeking, because he failed to recognise it; and this is what Theosophy is doing in a large measure for Christianity, not denying its truths, but making them more clear to those who have failed to perceive.

The first great aim of Theosophy is Unity. The proclaiming of unity in everything:—

"One God, one law, one element.

"And one far-off divine event to which the whole creation moves."

To find a common ground on which all spiritual belief rests, a common motive for all action, a common law of righteousness. Hence, in true Theosophy is no room for denial. It insists on the positive teaching of all religious systems, the negative side it leaves alone. Truth will live, falsehood need not be killed—it will die. And the speed of its death will be in exact proportion

to the strength of the positive assertion of truth. So, individualism, sectarianism, separateness of every kind, is diametrically opposed to the true spirit of Theosophy, which will, if we act up to that spirit, but bind us more firmly and closely together, minimising our differenes, magnifying our agreements, and so bringing about a greater harmony of thought and feeling, which is the only way to unity of action. Unity leads to goodness—goodness in its largest, widest, sense; not outward propriety of conduct or blamelessness in the eyes of our neighbours, but the endeavour after absolute purity of mind and heart, the effort towards self-sacrifice, self-knowledge, and self-control. All this is an essential part of Theosophy's first great aim.

And in no way is the urgent necessity for purity of life and thought more keenly brought home to each individual mind than in the teaching embodied in what is called "the law of *Karma*." The inevitable, inexorable justice of the divine law of consequences. "As a man sows, so also shall he reap." Every trivial thought or action entailing a good or evil result—it is the payment of the "uttermost farthing." To realize this law fully, its absolute justice and ultimate end involves that earnest endeavour after self-knowledge, which leads to self-control and effort towards higher things. Not the mere selfish thought that right-doing will produce personal satisfaction, but that higher reaching after goodness—that hunger of soul, which has for its final end the loss of self in the great All or Oneness. So goodness and unity are one, and nothing is good but what leads to unity. And the outcome of both is knowledge; not the mere intellectual attainments the world counts knowledge, but that higher wisdom, that knowledge of divine things which is indicated in the term Theosophy—Divine wisdom, science of divine things. And science it is, in the most exact meaning of that much misused word, which has come to mean only knowledge of material things, only to be proved and perceived by the evidence of man's five senses.

There are two methods of apprehending this divine science. First, the inward conviction of a truth, the intuitive perception of it. This is faith in its widest aspect, and involves reason. St. Paul, speaking of it in this sense, says, "Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen."

Upon this intuitive perception the intellect may be brought to bear—not to confirm, for conviction is there already, but to partially work out the steps leading to it by way of the intellect.

The second method is by appealing entirely to the intellect, and by laborious reasoning working out the perception of this divine science; but it must be the higher reason and not mere logic.

For both these methods the modern exposition of Eastern philosophy is an almost necessary study. For this knowledge, hidden in the sacred books of the East, is, to a certain extent, almost latent in every form of religious belief that has moved and guided the world. It contains the great truths of every great

religion, the roots from which that religion has sprung, and apparently new forms are but a casting of new light on the old truths. Theosophy puts forward the Eastern forms of thought in a manner appreciable to the Western mind, at a time when the Western mind, weighed down and degraded by the so-called advantages of civilization, the materialistic thought and the selfish luxury of life, is specially in need of new light on buried truths, new life infused into old forms of belief, and an awakening to the terrible divergence between its religious professions and its every-day life.

Theosophy regards all living faiths equally; but they must be alive, they must be rooted in the tree of divine wisdom and partake of its sap.

Knowledge of divine things leads to power. Power to develop the higher nature of man, power to control his animal nature by the divine self within him; power to work out his own salvation, and power to keep him in the path leading to the final goal.

This power increases in proportion to the purity of aim and singleness of purpose of those who would acquire and develop it. All ideas of self-aggrandisement weaken and destroy it, all selfishness converts it into a terrible weapon to wound him who wields it. Rightly used, it will overcome the law of Karma—that is, it will take the soul on to that higher plane where Karma ceases to be necessary; into that purer air where self in its lower meanings is cast out and the spirit of unity alone animates the soul.

This is a brief statement of some of the points of Theosophy. Such a philosophy, wide and far-reaching and all-embracing, is a mighty power for good. It includes all branches of knowledge, throwing clearer light on each one, and by helping man to realize his threefold nature, forwards the equal development of each part, for only in equal and harmonious growth is true progress possible. The tendency of all civilization is towards perfecting materiality, towards concentrating the consciousness on material things, and this directly leads to selfishness in its worst aspect—towards the separation of the individual from the mass—towards division and discord. Spirituality is the direct opposite of this, self-abnegation in its highest form being the aim—unity and harmony the necessary accompaniments. All excess of materiality produces a corresponding reaction towards spirituality. And to those who look beneath the surface there is now a growing spiritual effort, a greater earnestness in all systems of religious thought, an enlarged knowledge of higher things, and a translation of this knowledge into moral power. And here is where Theosophy appeals at once to those earnest but half-starved souls, growing, striving, struggling, to the light, but not seeing the way to it clearly. Some of the ideas it embodies have already sprung up in countless minds and hearts, scarcely conscious as yet of their existence; but when they are once recognised and carried into action, the bud grows to a blossom and the blossom will bear fruit.

But all inquiry into Theosophy must be done earnestly. There must be

no idle curiosity, above all, no idea that it is merely a short cut to the working of marvels and obtaining of abnormal powers. The aim of those who would learn this philosophy and follow its teachings must be absolutely a pure and unselfish one, the regeneration of themselves as the first step in that ladder which leads to the regeneration of the world, that bringing of light out of darkness which we all desire, and for which we sometimes so blindly strive.

The path is a difficult one, how difficult no one knows but those who have taken the first steps, and there is no retreat—no going back; but to the true aspirant, no danger and no terror can cloud the glory of that mountain top which he perceives so dimly with his inner sight, but whose piercing radiance thrills his weak powers with Divine strength, a strength which is a certain promise of victory.

F. A. Brodie-Innes.

# PERSONALITIES.

*From the* PATH, *November*, 1887.

STEP aside, O toiling brother, into a convenient bye-way, and for a moment let the surging crowd pass by. Do not tremble like a child for fear that you may be hopelessly left behind, for you will be forced back all too soon, though, if you really pause, and truly ponder, you will never again be so completely identified with the pursuits of the crowd, though you will still be a part of it. Ask of your soul: "What are these personalities that make up the mighty human tide so widely rushing past—this rushing tide replenished at every instant by birth, depleted at every instant by death, yet flowing on for ever?" How read you this journey from the cradle to the grave?

Think of the countless myriads whose weary, toiling, bleeding feet have worn deep the channels of this river of time. Listen to the complaints of the weary, the cries of the wounded, the groans of the despairing. Watch with pity the ashen faces as they hear the sound of the cataract ahead, over which they know they must plunge alone into unknown depths. Many are resigned in the presence of fate, for there is true courage at the heart of humanity, but how few are joyous except through ignorance and forgetfulness, and these are the frightened ones in the presence of the inevitable.

Listen to the loud acclaims, when in the rushing stream one is for a moment borne aloft on the crest of a wave, and watch the envy and even malice of those who are inevitably drawn into the hollow of the wave as they also struggle to reach the crest. Alas! the waves of Wealth, and Fame, and Power; Alas! the bubbling foam of Love. The night cometh and the stream is still; yet even in the arms of the Brother of Death the echoes of these mighty waves chant their requiem.

Listen a little deeper, O brother of my soul, and hear the sound of many voices: "What shall I eat? What shall I drink? and wherewithal shall I be clothed?" and then, alas! "O, whither do I tend?"

And still the surging tide rolls on. A friend is passing yonder; hail him and beckon him to thy side. He answers: "I cannot wait; I have not time." Alas! what hath he else but time, and the foam of the maddening billows?

Turn now to thy companion, he who bade thee turn aside. Canst thou stop to consider, "Is he short, or tall, or fat, or lean, or black, or white, or man, or woman?" "Are his garments soiled or clean?" "Comes he from the East, or from the West?" "Hath he letters of introduction?" "On whose authority did he bid thee halt?" "Did he speak in conventional language, and with the

proper accent?" "Has his raiment the odour of the sea, or the breath of the mountain, or the fragrance of the flowery vale?"

Be sure it is not thy awakened soul that thus inquires, 'tis only the voice of the stream yonder, and when thou turnest to look for thy companion, lo! he is gone, and thou art alone, alone with thy soul, and with the echoes of the stream. Fear chills thy blood, and every separate hair stands on end, and as thou rushest back into the surging stream, even thy boon companions are terrified at thy staring eyes, and thy death-like face.

Hast thou seen a ghost? yea, verily, the ghost of ghosts, the *Dweller of the Threshold*, and yet thou mightest have found a friend, a teacher, a brother. Rush back into the stream, O! terrified, thou that fleest from thy shadow and plunge beneath the festering waves, yet, even as its murky waters overwhelm thee, thy muscles creep, fear tugs at thy heart-strings.

Drain deep the cup, mount high the wave,
Tramp down the weak, envy the brave!
Bear high the bowl with dance and song,
Laugh at thy fears, shout loud and long,
"O wine of Life! O vintage rare!
Pressed by sore feet in deep despair."

Slowly the pendulum of time
Swings to and fro, with measured chime,
The Dweller e'er on Bacchus waits,
And jealous guards the golden gates.
O! wine of wisdom! soul distilled,
Won from the silence, Life fulfilled.

Vain are the things of time and sense,
Who follows these finds recompense,
Yet he who turns from these and waits,
The glimmer of the golden gates
Will bless the hand, whate'er it be
That tenders chart or offers key.

Came not the Christ in humble mien?
Poor and despised, the Nazarene,
And humble fishermen chose He
Beside the sea of Galilee;
Left not Lord Buddha throne and power
To meditate at midnight hour?

What matters it what hand bestows
The balm of healing for our woes?
For God is God, and Truth is Truth,
Ripe age is but immortal youth.
Let personalities alone,
Go through the gates! and reach the throne.

How many are turned aside by personalities? How many look to the garb of the messenger, forgetting the message, and yet is not the message plain? At

one time the message comes from a manger, at another it descends from a throne. Yet is the message ever the same. Nature and time regard not personalities, but swallow up all alike, yet do nature and time and destiny teach ever the same great lesson, and he who would learn of these must both forego and forget personalities, his own and those of others. Personalities are but the fleeting waves on the river of time, caused by the friction of the winds of fortune; they are thy weakness and not thy strength. Thy strength is in thy soul, and thy soul's strength is in the calm, and not in storm revealed.

Inquire not who or what the messenger, but study well the message that comes to thy soul, and bears thee ban or blessing, according as thou receivest it, and while thou waitest with lamps untrimmed the Bridegroom passes by.

What matters it to thee what infirmities the messenger may bear, except as thou mayest help him so to bear them that truth may run a freer race? Is it not enough for thee that truth hath given him her signet ring? Judge, then, of this, and if he falter in his speech or loiter by the way, take up the theme in clearer tones and speak of it from thy soul to all thy kind.

Wilt thou withhold thy blessing from the hand that bears the gift, and covet while rejecting the very gift it bears. If thou art so at cross purposes with thyself, how canst thou be *at one* with truth?

Truth is many-sided, speaks every language, is clothed in every garb, yet is she ever still the same, *One*, and unchangeable, now and for ever. And if she is no respector of persons, canst thou be more select than she? Alas! thou canst not find her thus, but error rather, and self-deceived rush down the stream of time, and when thy personalities fall off then shalt thou realize that thou didst refuse the banquet of the gods by scorning thus their messenger. Search out, and know and love and serve the truth, *for truth's own sake.* Follow it through all disguises with scent more sure and keen than hound in search of game. Refuse it not, though it reach thee from a dunghill, welcome it as though straight from God's own throne, and thus shall it ne'er escape thee, and neither love, nor hate, nor fear shall mar thy harvests, and truth shall honour thee, as thou hast welcomed her.

Beware of false authority, for neither pope nor priest, nor book can of itself contain it all, and yet despise them not, for so thou'lt miss the truth. The sole authority for truth is *truth's own self*, and if thy soul is but akin to her, thy quickened soul will recognize her every garb, by ties more strong than blood, by kinship everlasting, and as the waters mingle with the sea, so flows thy soul into the bosom of the deeps whence springs afresh in thee the everlasting Life which is the vital breath of Truth.

HARIJ.

# WHAT IS THEOSOPHY?

Von jener Macht, die alle Wesen bindet,
Befreit der Mensch sich, der sich überwindet. —GÖTHE.

So many people show excessive hostility to the mere word, "Theosophy," because, in complete ignorance of its real meaning, they look upon it as the representative of classical infidelity, and loudly condemn every one pursuing studies in that direction.

It may, therefore, not be amiss to direct a few words of explanation to the general public in the hope that this modest endeavour to throw some light upon a misunderstood subject into prejudiced minds may meet with some response.

Let us divide man into his "seen" and "unseen" parts, viz., his physical and psychical nature, his body and his soul. We have no concern here with his body or its various component parts, but his soul we will consider under its three aspects:—

1. The "animal" soul, comprising our passions and all lower emotions.

2. The "human" soul, or our intelligent or reasoning mind.

3. The "spiritual" or higher soul, whence arise the dictates of our conscience, all our aspirations towards the divine and the general promptings of our religious nature.

Far from these groups representing so many distinct layers or strata, they must be conceived as interpenetrating and reacting upon each other, though we must constitute a gradation from lower to higher, as this forms one of the essential bases of theosophical teaching.

The "animal" soul is so-called because it is in close connection with all the wants and desires of the body; it is under our carnal and sensuous influences, and constantly yielding to their power, unless controlled by superior checks.

The "spiritual" soul, on the contrary, is farthest removed from the material plane, ever trying and yearning for an inward flight in the direction of the ideal or divine, yet incessantly hampered and weighed down by the powerful attractions originating in the "animal" soul.

In this struggle between the two, and alternately lending its help to either, we have the "human" soul, full of resolve, or hesitating by fits and starts, whether it is to throw its entire weight into either scale, or allow itself to be carried along, almost passively, in the swaying movements of the fight.

Yet it is the "human" soul, under its aspect of "reasoning mind," which has to decide in the end, whether or not it is to enlist in the service of the self-

willed lower soul, or whether, listening to the inner voice of conscience, it will devote all its energies to the development of our higher nature and bring it within the borderland of the divine.

In this battle of our various natures, success would mean the evolution of our higher principles and the crushing out of our lower ones, for victory can only be achieved when the powerful influences of our material desires have been so far conquered, that they can no longer offer any lasting resistance to the soul's upward progress.

There is no desire to advocate asceticism or seclusion of a rigid kind to enable the aspirant to reach this stage of self-conquest; our "animal" soul is not to be killed, but its powers are to be brought under such complete subjection to the *purified* will that they can be used as active levers for our ascent, though, undoubtedly, before they can be rendered serviceable for higher purposes, "transmuted," as it were, their energies for doing harm must be reduced within the smallest limits, and various methods for achieving this end will be found best suited to the requirements of different individuals. The practical lesson to be learnt, above all others, is the conquest of our selfish desires and the devotion of our best energies to the services of our fellow-men.

When the hold of matter, or, to use an equivalent, when the love of self has been sufficiently subdued within us to cause a state of even temporary balance between our lower and higher soul, evolutionary progress has reached a stage, when our consciousness fully realizes the momentous issues placed within our range, and the occasional victories obtained, moreover, fill the soul, not only with brighter confidence in its power, but also with a clearer perception of the methods of action required for attaining the goal.

The centre of our soul-life must, we are told, be made to gravitate on a steadily rising plane of consciousess, for thus only, by infusing a higher and purer purpose into every thought and action of our daily life, can the great aim, the spiritualization of our soul, be achieved. By this spiritualization we eventually attain to that inner illumination which reveals "the Christ within us."

We shall be told that these views are purely visionary, as proof for such a theory is nowhere to be found; and undoubtedly it is true, that *belief* is necessary at one stage or other of our soul's upward career, for, before we can choose the road of our pilgrimage leading through unknown regions, we must trust for guidance to the loving advice of those who have trodden the path before us. Yet how small is the amount of *blind* faith, that is required of us! Any one, by trying earnestly and perseveringly to take a few steps in the indicated direction and conforming to the prescribed road, can, step by step, and without difficulty, verify the fact that the aim he pursues is not an imaginary will-o'-the-wisp, but that the results of his development, gradually but surely brought within range of his consciousness, prove to him the possibility, nay, probability, of attaining the higher grades. Looking back to his earliest start-

ing point, he will see in vanishing distance all the obstructions which at the time appeared insurmountable, and as long as they existed, shut out all further progress from his view. After such self-gained experience, are we not justified in trusting to the testimony of saints, the assurances of initiates, and to the general teachings of Theosophy, that by steady perseverance on the upward path, the inner light, whose attraction we already dimly and fitfully feel, will more and more come within our reach, and eventually make us partakers of "the eternal life"?

All religions teach this great truth and proclaim their ultimate aim to be the complete union of the soul with the Divine spirit; but Theosophy asserts that, while no single religion possesses a patent key for opening the heavenly gates, it is the birthright of every human soul to claim and to receive admittance, as soon as in the process of its spiritual evolution it has reached the required standard.

To this stupendous work many terrestrial lives must be necessary—lives of incessant struggle, of unselfish strife and high aspiration; but once the light is kindled in our hearts and steadfastly kept alive, it is the sure beacon which will safely lead us through ages of darkness to the eventual "salvation" of our soul, the glorious goal and end of our pilgrimage.

H. A. V.

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# ACQUIRED HABITS.

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IN attempting to deal with problems which only find their solution worked out to the full on planes and in terms incomprehensible to our ordinary senses, it would seem possible that illustrations drawn from the science of physiology should serve to explain these problems somewhat more fully than those illustrations which are drawn from physical science alone. Physiology is at least the science of life, and though, when pressed, we must admit that we know very little indeed of the main factors which lie behind the phenomena of life; and that, with all the means of research which we possess, we know nothing of even the physical forces *in themselves*, but only study their manifestations and correlations, yet we may, at all events, argue from the little we do know, and attempt to correct our conclusions by comparison with the analogies which we can draw from every science. The principle involved in the "as above, so below," is shown to be true in all departments of science, and has formed a most valuable means of verifying the results obtained by pushing a theory to its legitimate conclusion. Thus, by correcting the phenomena of vital force by those of physical, we may arrive at many more or less just conclusions. Therefore, it is probable that by proceeding a step further, and drawing analogies from physiology, we may form an idea of what, for want of a better term, may be called the life of morality, and the forces whereby it is governed. By the term moral, I do not mean to convey any idea of that which underlies what is ordinarily known as morality, but a very much wider idea than that, namely, the force which really lies at the base of and inspires all our *motives* of action. Of course, these are indirectly also at the root of our physical and what may be called our animate life, in which we men are in contact with the life of animals; but at present we need not endeavour to make a distinction between man and the animals which are endowed with the physical and animate life force, but in whom the moral life is entirely latent, save in the case of a very few of the higher species, such as dogs and elephants. Though, even in these cases, it may be argued with good show of reason that this "moral life" of the higher animals is the result of education.

Now, in man and animal alike there are great nervous centres which govern the vital phenomena, and hence, as a consequence, the physical phenomena of life. These centres, as they are called, are formed by collections of nerve cells, which occupy a very fairly defined area. They are found in the

brain and the spinal cord for the most part, and to a lesser degree in the great vital organs themselves. Further, there is what is known as the sympathetic system of nerves, with its closely meshed network of nerves and ganglia, which lies outside, but in front of, the vertebral column, the whole length of the body; this system is closely connected in its whole extent with the brain and spinal cord, and the branches therefrom, which are known as the cerebro-spinal system of nerves. Again, to some extent the control of the nerves lies with the Will of any man, and the actions which result are termed "voluntary," but a very large majority of the processes and functions of the animal body are what are called "Reflex." These "Reflex" processes for the most part take place thus:—An impression is made on what are called the nerves of sensation; these conduct a stimulus to one of the nerve centres above mentioned, and from this centre the stimulus is reflected along a motor nerve, and the action or function ensues. Thus the sensation is "reflected" into motion independently of the consciousness of the individual. Perhaps the best example of a limited reflection is in the case of the eye, when, in response to the stimulus of light, the iris alone, of all the muscles in the body, moves. Now, all reflex actions are essentially involuntary, although they in great part admit of being controlled, modified and prevented by the will. They, most of them, are directed for the preservation of the well-being of the body, and markedly show how the nerve centres combine and arrange in order the action of the muscles, so that they may unite for this common end. Among "Reflex" actions there is a large class called "Secondary," which require for their first performance, and for many subsequent performances, an effort of the will more or less intense, but which, by constant repetition, are habitually and almost mechanically performed, and in many cases almost without the intervention of consciousness and volition; such are reading, writing, and walking. This capacity of the nervous system, which consists in "organizing conscious actions into more or less unconscious ones," is that which makes education and training possible. It is by "association" of the reflex actions frequently repeated in a definite order that these actions come to take on a species of "automatism." To such an extent is this carried that we are all familiar with instances of persons, when in the somnambulic condition, writing and playing the piano in a state of complete unconsciousness to physical surroundings.

In fact, "automatism" is a very important point in the argument. It is employed by physiologists to indicate the origination in nervous centres of impulses and their conduction from those centres independently of the reception of a stimulus from another part. And in this sense it is not possible in the present state of physiological knowledge, to say what actions are "automatic." But the nearest examples are certainly the functions of respiration and the rhythmic action of the heart, which will be considered later on. Suffice it at

present that it is a very important point that actions, which are distinctly reflex at the beginning, may be organized into unconscious actions which have a very strong character about them of automatism, and that the two above-mentioned functions are those which are all at the foundation of vital phenomena, and hence, by the passage of time and by education, would necessarily most nearly approach to being automatic.

We may now consider the sympathetic system of nerves. This system of nerves at first sight appears to be anatomically too complex to be understood. In reality, however, it is much more simple in arrangement than the cerebro-spinal, and its complexity is due to the manner in which each part is linked to the neighbouring and distant parts and to the cerebro-spinal system as well. When dissected out, it is found that the essential parts of this system consist of a ganglion, or nerve centre, and two nerves—afferent and efferent—leading to this centre, and from it to one of the organs. Thus the sympathetic system is made up of an enormous number of small systems, and the whole are united into the greatest complexity. But there is one essential difference between the two systems. In the case of the cerebro-spinal system, the majority of the actions taking place under its guidance are voluntary actions; in the case of the sympathetic system, not only do the majority of actions take place without a voluntary effort, but they are never controlled by the mind save under the strong excitement or depressing influence of some passion; or, secondarily, through some "voluntary movement" with which the involuntary region of the body is "associated." But in this latter case the action is really involuntary. Thus, in exceptional circumstances only does the mind control the action of the sympathetic nerves, and then only under undue excitement or depression; while, for the most part, the various centres of the sympathetic system, and also of the spinal cord, are reflex centres, which, subject to the "inhibiting action" of the brain or more highly-organized centre possess an independent action of their own that, aided by custom, habit, and frequency of use, almost amounts to automatism.

In the consideration of automatism we find that there is a nervous region of very great importance, situated at the top of the spinal cord and immediately below the brain, and which, roughly speaking, is just within the skull, about an inch behind a line drawn horizontally through the lobe of the ear. This region is so important that it has been experimentally found that the entire brain and spinal cord with this sole exception may be removed and still the heart will continue to beat, and the animal will go on breathing. But when this region is injured, death ensues at once. Now, the most important of the functions of the Medulla Oblongata, as the region in question is called, is that of respiration, and this one function may serve as the type of automatic actions, although there is some dispute about it. Like all the functions which are necessary to life it is

essentially involuntary, but its action is also, to some extent, under the control of the will, for otherwise man would be unable to speak or to sing. It is argued that the act is a reflex one owing to the stimulation of nervous fibres which are distributed to the lungs; on the other hand, it is stated that respiration takes place by direct stimulation of the Medulla Oblongata by the increasingly venous condition of the blood. Probably both functions exist, but the nerves leading from the lungs to the "respiratory centre" may be cut or may be paralysed by chloroform, and still the complicated muscular movements which constitute respiration take place in an orderly manner. As said above, respiration can to some extent be controlled by the will, and the breath can be "held" for a varying length of time, which increases with practice. But the need of breath eventually overcomes the strongest opposition, and even the most determined attempts to commit suicide in this manner have failed. Still, there is no doubt that by practice persons have increased the time during which they can hold their breath, as in certain well-authenticated cases of suspended animation; which have occurred in various parts of the world and especially in India, and thus there is shown to be a power which may be exercised in control of the natural automatism of the body, and which, so far as the bodily frame is concerned, is independent of it. Were this not the case, the instances of sudden death which occur through shock, and without injury to any part of the body, would be impossible, for there is no reason why the functions of respiration and of the heart should be interfered with, and the body would go on breathing and the heart beating under the stimulus of the Medulla Oblongata.

Thus, then, it is this "organizing conscious actions into more or less unconscious ones," but which may still be under the control of some force that we may call the will, which is of the highest importance to the occultist, as will be seen later on. Speaking in terms of planes it enables a man to do two or perhaps more things at the same time. Starting an original impulse to walk from point to point, a man may take the necessary steps with no other guidance than the reflected sensations of one step to make another, and during the time occupied his mind may be engaged on matters of a totally different character. But waiving these considerations and the assumption that the brain is physically a registering "organ of mind," it is evident that to a considerable extent the brain has the control of the body.

To those who have studied metaphysics, the term "personality" is a very familiar one. In reference to the present subject it would seem to stand to the "higher self" in very much the same relation as the body does to the brain—or rather to the brain only as the organ of mind; that is to say that the personality is, on the moral plane referred to previously, the other covering more or less gross, of the real man within—the higher self. This latter is the gradually increasing product of ages and is added to by the "personality" only

when it carries out the spiritual aspirations which arise beyond, but which are communicated to the personality by the higher self. Consequently we may compare the actions dictated by the personality to those physical ones which are governed by the lower reflex centres and which have no concern whatever with the brain.

And this brings into prominence a curious fact in physiology and pathology, that if either a nerve centre or nerve leading from that centre be stimulated without the impulse passing *to and through* that centre, the actions which result are tumultuous and disordered. This fact has a very important bearing by analogy on those actions which are dictated reflexly or not by the "personality" only, for, as regards the higher self or brain, they are found tumultuous and disorderly, and are, as as a rule, not "directed with a view to the welfare of the organism," and more especially of other organisms. It would be impossible to enter on an elaborate analysis of what the personality really is—and as tedious as if one were in these pages to enter on a detailed description of the minute anatomy of the brain and spinal cord. Man is a compound, in his personality, of "desires, passions, interests, modes of thinking and feeling, opinions, prejudices, judgments of others, likings and dislikings, affections and ambitions, public and private." For the most part this personality constitutes the horizon of man, and identifies him with this narrowed circle of interests. In other words, he becomes exceedingly "Selfish." Of course, the circle is very frequently enlarged, as in the case of a family, of a society, of a church, or a state, and other indivduals esteem men in proportion as their circle enlarges. Now, the enlargement of the circle to and beyond these limits is a process of extreme difficulty, and especially when the circle is enlarged beyond these limits. But there is also another element which has to be eliminated—the thought of Self must not enter into the consideration at all. That is to say, that the personality, as a source of motive, must be entirely eliminated and destroyed; and this is the process which occupies ages, and is accompanied by such pain and suffering that it can only be faced by the aid of a consciousness of the higher self, and that this work is the only work worth doing. It is not very difficult to understand why this should be so difficult, and why it should take ages to accomplish, for we have to remember that it is the accentuation of personality against personality—the competition to live—which is at the base of all our modern education. In every age the strong man has kept his citadel against all comers until a stronger than he came, and the question is whether he can find a deeper and greater source of strength. To some extent that has been found, for "union is strength"; and the only problem has been amidst the clashing of personalities to make union possible. The parallel in physiology is seen in the difficulty, only obviated by long practice, experienced by divers in holding their breath. Murder will out, respiration will recommence. and the educated

personality reasserts itself as the body insists upon the breath it is accustomed to have. But, again, it is possible for man to lay aside the limitations of his personality and merge his living interests with those of the world in which other personalities have an equal right and share. He can force himself to no longer feel separate from them, and to live in companionship with that which in them is beyond their personalities—their individualities, their Higher Selves. But this is a process which needs an enormous strength of will and an application to which most men are unequal. The ordinary senses have to be stilled and quieted before—if one may misapply a term—the sense of the higher self comes into play, and the divine companionship of the higher self is felt and realized. Thus, then, the analogy of physiology is maintained: the bodily functions are reflexly fulfilled, and by long education, in some cases, automatically, but are subject, in proportion as another education has trained the mind and will, to the brain. Equally so on the moral plane, the desires and tendencies of the personality act more or less reflexly and automatically without other control. But in proportion as the limitations of Self have been transcended, so also is the extent of the power increased which controls the personality. The brain in one case, the higher self in the other, being trained and educated to send down impulses sufficient to control the physiological needs of the animal mechanism, or the desires of the personality.

But a further and yet more interesting problem now presents itself for discussion. We have seen that it is rational to conclude that conscious acts are by education organized into unconscious, and that the two functions most important to the physiological health of the body, viz.: respiration and the action of the heart, have been rendered automatic and independent almost of any voluntary conscious effort, although this control may be, in some instances, recovered. Consequently, by analogy, the control on the moral plane may be vested in the higher self, as against the personality, by an effort to unite the consciousness with that higher self. That is, the higher self, or brain, will be able to control the physiological personality, or a higher centre dominate a lower. But a still further point would seem to consist in this. Why should it not be possible to make of the higher self a reflex centre, and finally an automatic one, which shall control the personality absolutely. On the physiological analogy it would certainly seem reasonable that this should be so. Let the personality send up a suggestion for action to the reflex centre, which may be in or below the level of the higher self, as is the case in the relative positions of the cerebral hemispheres and the Medulla Oblongata. Supposing that the motor point be in the higher self, it would only seem natural that the corresponding motion excited by the suggestion of the personality will either be in accord with the higher self, and be accomplished, or will be nullified. If, however, the motor point be below

the higher self, then the communication must be handed on in order that the higher self shall have the control and the personality not allowed to exercise sway.

Finally, however, the real importance of the argument does not rest with the higher self, but with the spiritual life beyond; or, as "Light on the Path" states it, "the life beyond individuality."

Let us grant for the moment that it is possible for the consciousness to be identified with the higher self, and that the personality as militating against that better part of man, and consequently interfering with "the life beyond individuality," is entirely subjected and controlled by a centre of force certainly reflex, and, if possible, automatic, which is vested in the higher self. What, then, is the consequence? The personality as a source of separateness is done away with, and only used as an instrument in the same way that the physicaal body uses a finger. The real life is centred in the higher self, which maintains an automatic action over the personality, and prevents it from becoming a source of mischief. The force which is vested in the higher self or individuality, is derived from that united Spirit of Life which is beyond individuality, and the man is left free to concentrate his attention and aspirations on that Spirit of Life, and draw more and more of its influence through his higher self into the world around him. Just as the physiological needs of the body are controlled by an unconscious, involuntary mechanism, so the personality becomes a conquered instrument, used for ends greater than it knows of. Man, as man, is no longer swayed by his changing and temporary desires, and has reached the happy "Waters of Oblivion."

A. I. R.

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# PSYCHOMETRY AND THOUGHT-TRANSFERENCE.

ALTHOUGH what may be termed the psychic science has been known from the days of remote antiquity to the few, whose motto was "To keep silence," yet the interest in it, which has now been awakened in all parts of the civilized world, is of comparatively recent growth. The credit of drawing public attention in this direction is in a measure due to Professor Buchanan, of America, who in 1849 wrote* :—"About nine years since, in conversation with Bishop Polk, of the Episcopal Church, he informed me that his own sensibility was so acute, that if he should by accident touch a piece of brass, even in the night, when he could not see what he touched, he immediately felt the influence through his system, and could recognize the offensive metallic taste." This conversation suggested a line of inquiry to the Professor, who for some years pursued a series of experiments with the object of discovering the action of

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* Journal of Man, Vol. I., p. 51.

metals, drugs, and strongly flavoured substance upon persons of that sensitive temperament, which is the peculiar idiosyncrasy of psychometers and thought-readers. His results were given out from time to time in the "Journal of Man," and have more recently been embodied in a work entitled "Psychometry." At an early stage, the investigation was taken up by Professor Denton and his wife, who performed together a vast number of experiments, principally with objects of archæological interest, and published a full account in 1863, in the well-known book, "The Soul of Things," which has now passed through a number of editions. The year 1882 witnessed the foundation, in London, of the Society for Psychical Research, who at once took up the subject of *super-sensuous perception* and the *nature and laws of the direct action of mind on mind.* An exhaustive series of experiments under test conditions has been carried on ever since by scientific members of that society, and recorded in the reports which have from time to time been issued by them, and have brought a large portion of the English reading public to, at any rate, a partial belief in what has been termed "thought-transference," or, more popularly, "thought-reading." English society was astounded at the spectacle of a number of her recognized scientists giving their attention to things which it had been customary to consider as merely the humbug of quacks and charlatans. Talk led to action, and before long in English drawing-rooms ladies and gentlemen were to be seen practising what is called the "Willing Game," or, blindfolded and hand in hand, wandering about the room in search of the hidden pin. Everywhere the question was asked:

"WHAT IS THOUGHT-READING AND WHAT IS PSYCHOMETRY?"

Although the dual title of Psychometry and Thought-transference has been given to this pamphlet, these two subjects are, in reality, branches of one and the same psychic science, to which the name Psychometry—from the Greek *ψυχή μέτρον*, soul as a measure—is as applicable as any other. For an impression to pass from one person to another or from a picture to a person, we may assume from analogy (1) that there is some intervening medium through which that impression can be transmitted; (2) that there is a force to give the momentum necessary to convey it from one point to another; and (3) that there is an apparatus capable of registering the impression and converting it into terms of ordinary consciousness. Let us take the familiar illustration of the electric telegraph. The battery gives the necessary force, the impression is transferred through the wire, and the instrument registers it. But, it may be said, in many of the recorded cases of thought-transference—the telegraphic appearance of one person to another at a distance, for instance—there is no wire to conduct the impression, so the analogy falls to the ground. Not so. For one of Edison's latest additions to applied electrical science is an instrument by

which a telegraphic message can be shot from one point to another—within certain limits of distance—with no more solid conducting medium for its transmission than is afforded by the amosphere surrounding our globe.

Furthermore, the possibility of numerous telepathic vibrations crossing in their transit, wthout interfering with each other, has a close analogy in electrical science. For in the *Pall Mall Gazette* for May 27, 1886, we read :—

" The invention of the phonopore serves to remind us how small a corner of the veil of nature we have lifted in matters electrical. The duplexing, or even the quadruplexing of an Atlantic cable, by means of which two or four messages can be sent from each end of one cable at the same time without conflict or confusion, is about as startling, when carefully considered, as any purely material occurrence can be. But the phonopore, the principle of which consists in employing the electrical " induction noises " as motive power to work telegraphic instruments, or transmit the voice, or do both at once, is far more remarkable. Mr. Langdon Davies has proved the existence of this new special form of electrical energy, and has constructed already a variety of instruments to embody it practically. The mathematico-physical explanation of the ' phonophoric impulse ' has yet to be found."

If electrical messages can cross in a cable without interfering with each other, why should not telepathic impulses betwixt persons on opposite sides of the globe ? The one phenomenon is not more remarkable than the other.

Now, the hypothesis of an ether filling all space, and even interpenetrating solid bodies, has been maintained by philosophers and scientists of diverse schools. To Descartes, who made extension the sole essential property of matter, and matter a necessary condition of extension, the bare existence of bodies apparently at a distance was a proof of the existence of a continuous medium between them. Newton accounted for gravitation by differences of pressure in an ether, but did not publish his theory, " because he was not able from experiment and observation to give a satisfactory account of this medium, and the manner of its operation in producing the chief phenomena of nature." Huygens propounded the theory of a luminiferous ether to explain the phenomena of light. Faraday conjectured that it might also be the agent in electromagnetic phenomena. " For my own part," he says, " considering the relation of a vacuum to the magnetic force and the general character of magnetic phenomena external to the magnet, I am much more inclined to the notion that in transmission of the force there is such an action external to the magnet, than that the effects are merely attraction and repulsion at a distance. Such an action may be a function of the ether ; for it is not unlikely that, if there be an ether, it should have other uses than simply the conveyance of radiation."*

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* Experimental Researches, 3075.

J. Clerk Maxwell says on this subject: "Whatever difficulties we may have in forming a consistent idea of the constitution of the ether, there can be no doubt that the interplanetary and interstellar spaces are not empty, but are occupied by a material substance or body, which is certainly the largest and probably the most uniform body of which we have any knowledge. Whether this vast homogeneous expanse of isotropic matter is fitted, not only to be a medium of physical interaction between distant bodies, and to fulfil other physical functions, of which perhaps we have as yet no conception, but also, as the authors of the 'Unseen Universe' seem to suggest, to constitute the material organisms of beings exercising functions of life and mind as high or higher than ours are at present, is a question far transcending the limits of physical speculation." We also find it stated in the works of this and other authors, that their ether is elastic and has a definite density; and that it is capable of transmitting energy in the form of vibrations or waves. According to Fresnel, half this energy is in the form of potential energy, due to the distortion of elementary portions of the medium, and half in the form of kinetic energy, due to the motion of the medium.

Some of the recent papers on scientific subjects seem to indicate that one ether is not sufficient to account for all different phenomena of the manifestations of light, heat, electricity, etc., attributed to its agency, but there must be several ethers, unless, indeed, the one ether may be manifested in a number of different ways.

The foregoing is a rough sketch of the views of the physical scientists on the necessity of there being a medium or mediums pervading space and capable of transmitting energies of different kinds in the form of vibrations. The teaching, however, of the Kabbalistic and other schools, of what is wrongly termed occult science (for there can be but one science, even if men may study different parts of it, or see it from different points of view), as given out in recent times in the works of Eliphas Levi and in the publications of the Theosophical Society, has several points of difference from that of the physical scientists. They recognise a tenuous cosmic ether, which they call akaz, which exists between one solar system and another, and it is as infinite as the original cosmic matter. It is the result of motion in that cosmic matter. They furthermore state that there is in the solar system a tenuous substance which they call the astral light, or astral fluid. This is not akaz, but a different form of cosmic ether. Its existence is based upon the fact that certain phenomena can only be explained upon the assumption of such a substance. It is an object of direct perception to persons possessing a highly-trained psychic sense. It is that entity in the manifested solar system which corresponds with what is called the *Sooksma Saririra* in man. Though it exists uniformly throughout space in the solar system, it is yet more dense around certain objects by reason of their

molecular action. This is especially the case around the brain and spinal cord of human beings, where it forms what is called the 'aura.' Where it still more closely surrounds the nerve cells and nerve tubes, it is called the 'nerve-aura,' which is not nerve fluid, but the aura of the nerve-fluid. This astral fluid only comes into existence when differentiation takes place in the original *Mula Prakriti*, or undifferentiated cosmic matter, the one essence in its pralayic condition. If the scientists recognise a distinction between bound ether and free ether, it amounts to the same kind of distinction as that between astral fluid and akaz. As, according to the hypothesis of the scientists, ether can be thrown into vibration, and in that form transmit the energies of light, heat, and electricity, so in like manner is the astral fluid capable of receiving, transmitting, and retaining impressions of manifold kinds.*

But the attributes of the astral fluid are much more numerous than those of the ether of the scientist. For the image of every object in nature and every scene that takes place is impressed upon it, and, once impressed, remains for all time, and can be summoned up by the psychic sense of one who has the gift of reading this universal medium. This fact is most poetically illustrated by Professor Draper, where he speaks of ganglionic impressions on the surface of polished metal being registered and preserved for an indefinite space of time. "A shadow," he says "never falls upon a wall without leaving thereupon a permanent trace—a trace which might be made visible by resorting to proper processes. . . . . The portraits of our friends or landscape views may be hidden from the eye on the sensitive surface, but they are ready to make their appearance as soon as proper developers are resorted to. A spectre is concealed on a silver or glassy surface until by our necromancy we make it come forth into the visible world. Upon the walls of our most private apartments, when we think the eye of intrusion is altogether shut out and our retirement can never be profaned, there exist the vestiges of all our acts, silhouettes of whatever we have done."

But beyond registering images, we are told that the astral fluid registers every thought of man, so that it forms, as it were, the book of nature, the soul of the Kosmos, the universal mind, a history of the world and all its sciences and schools of thought, from the day when the Parabrahmic breath went forth and the eternal Logos awoke into activity. Some men of science have come very near this truth; for Babbage, and subsequently Jevons, have stated their conviction that every thought, displacing the particles of the brain and setting them in motion, scatters them throughout the universe, and that "each particle of the existing matter must be a register of all that has happened."

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For further information see *Theosophist* for March, 1885, Art. "Notes on Occult Philosophy." By T. Subba Row, B.A., B.L.

The following experience of Mrs. Denton may perhaps help to give some idea of the astral world as it appears to a psychometer :—*

"I am in a different world from any I have ever observed. I have become positive not only to outward surroundings, but even to the psychometric influences usually received, in order to distinguish this. Yet it appears like a realm of real, substantial existences, stretching back, and backward still, almost interminably into both time and space.

"I see forms—people, and the results of their labours; even the very effort that produced the results. At first I thought it was a species of mirage. It seemed like a picture of all that had ever been; yet now it seemed to me that I could step from this planet upon that world (I can call it nothing else), and travel back through all the scenes that have ever transpired in this.

"What a difference between that which we recognise as matter here and what seems like matter there! In the one, the elements are so coarse and so angular, I wonder that we can endure it at all, much more that we can desire to continue our present relation to it. In the other, all the elements are so refined, they are so free from those great rough angularities which characterise the elements here, that I can but regard that as by so much more than this, the real existence.

"Something appears to me to be passing continually from our earth, and from all existences on its surface, only to take on there the self-same form as that from which it emanated here; *as if every moment as it passed had borne with it an eternal fixedness*, not the record merely of our thoughts and deeds, but the actual imperishable being, quick with pulsing life, thinking the thought and performing the deed, instead of passing away into utter nothingness; that which is *here* and *now* for ever continuing, an eternized *there* and *then*.

"That portion of this realm which represents our earth and her history appears to occupy that portion of space through which the earth has heretofore passed—her entire pathway since she became an independent member of the solar system."

On that occasion Mrs. Denton probably saw more of the real soul of things behind the material veil of Nature than in any of her other recorded experiments.

To revert to the subject of auras, which play an important part both in Thought-transference and Psychometry, the theory is that every object, animate and inanimate, has an aura—a specialization of the astral fluid surrounding it, which varies in proportion to its molecular activity. These auras and the images they contain may be directly perceived by some sensitives.† But unless the sensitive is thoroughly trained, and can carry his will-power into that plane

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* "Soul of Things." Denton. Vol. iii, pp. 345-6,

† *Vide* Reichenbach's experiments.

of matter, he cannot fix the images which he sees sufficiently long to interpret them into terms of the language of the normal human consciouness of our race. But this applies rather to Psychometry than to Thought-transference, for in the latter case the necessity for will-power is on the side of the agent who transmits the image or thought to the aura of the percipient. It is the aura round the nerve-cells and nerve-tubes that enables a man to catch the impression made upon the astral light of the Kosmos. Adopting for the moment the division of the mental phenomena into the three divisions of modern psychologists—intellectual images, emotions, and volition—we find that the intellectual image makes itself felt by the impression of the image on the aura; that emotion is manifested in a change of colour, which corresponds with the change of feeling; and that volition makes itself felt by an increase in vibration in the astral aura. An illustration will perhaps make this clearer: suppose that the agent mentally conceives the idea of a circle. He forms the image of the figure in his aura by means of a physical alteration in his nervous fluid. Then by an act of volition he converts the image into vibration, in which condition it passes through the astral fluid to the aura of the percipient, where the reverse process takes place. The vibration is the substance of the image in a different form. So, if a certain kind of vibration corresponds to a certain thought or image in one man's mind, it can be reconverted into the same thought or image in the sensorium of another. The metathesis of thought is a natural process in transcendental chemistry. For the fundamental basis of all occult science is that there is but one essence, and that all things—concrete matter in its various manifestations, forethought, and what is called spirit—are but different forms of this cosmic matter, the difference consisting in the distance separating the molecules and in their arrangement. We see glimpses of this law in some of the commonest phenomena of nature. The force which drives a locomotive engine is steam. That steam can be condensed to water, but it is still the same matter, the principal differences being that the molecules are closer together and move upon each other according to a different plan. That water can then be frozen. The ice is still the same matter as it was when it was manifested as steam or force, for steam is invisible to the eye, but its molecules have arranged themselves according to a mathematical plan in assuming a crystal in form. But this ice can again be converted into steam. So it is with thought, although from the ethereal nature of the substances occular demonstration is out of the question. This is no new idea. We find traces of it in the earliest times of which there is any written record. It would appear that the Egyptians placed the eternal idea pervading the universe in the ether, or the will going forth and becoming force and matter.* In our own time this same idea about the ether

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* See Cory. "Ancient Fragments." 240.

has been revived by the authors of the "Unseen Universe," who say that from ether have come all things, and to it all will return; that the images of all things are indelibly impressed upon it; and that it is the storehouse of the germs, or of the remains of all visible forms, and even ideas. To summarise the process of the transference of a thought or image, we may say (1) that it is conceived in the mind of the operator (the nature of that conception is too deep a subject to be treated here); (2) that it passes into the nerve-fluid, interpenetrating and surrounding the brain with its aura, the nerve-aura; where (3) it is met by the will or odylic fluid, which is generated in a different part of the body (*i.e.*, about the solar plexus) and a chemical reaction takes place, which results in (4) an image being formed in the astral aura surrounding the agent's head, and (5) transmitted in the form of waves through the astral fluid to (6) the astral aura of the percipient, whence it is conducted through his nerve-aura and nerve-fluid, and thus (7) reaching his sensorium, is registered in terms of ordinary consciousness as an image.

If the will of the operator or agent in a thought-transference experiment is not sufficiently powerful to give direction to the vibration generated in the astral fluid, touch is required. Where there is magnetic sympathy, or at least absence of repulsive tendency, the vibration immediately reaches its destination.

A concrete representation of colour in the aura or halo surrounding the head may be seen in any image or painting of Sri Buddha, which is always depicted in a number of layers of different colours. These coloured layers of aura are called the "Rays." The nimbus, or glory, is also associated with the illuminated personages of all religions.

The aura of every particle of inanimate matter is capable of taking, so to speak, a permanent astral photograph of every occurrence and every scene which has taken place in the neighbourhood. "It seems," says Professor Hitchcock,* speaking of the influence of light upon bodies and of the formation of pictures upon them by means of it, "that this photographic influence pervades all nature, nor can we say where it stops. We do not know, but it may imprint upon the world around us our features, as they are modified by various passions, and thus fill nature with daguerreotype impressions of all our actions; . . . . it may be, too, that there are tests by which nature, more skilful than any photographist, can bring out and fix these portraits, so that acuter senses than ours shall see them as on a great canvas, spread over the material universe. Perhaps, too, they may never fade from that canvas, but become specimens in the great picture-gallery of eternity."

But how, some one may object, can such a small particle of matter hold such extensive images? How can every particle reflect every image? And how can so

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* Religion of Geology.

many images be photographed in the same space without making a composite image, a mere smudge? The first two of these objections have been answered: "If," says a writer on the subject, "one hold a drop of quicksilver on a plate, the face is reflected in it (so are all the objects in the room). If the drop be split up into a thousand drops, each one reflects the face again." This may be carried on to infinity, each particle reflecting surrounding objects.

* "If one erect a paper screen, say five feet square, and stand behind it, he will find, of course, that the view in front is completely obstructed. But make a pin-hole in the right-hand upper corner, and place the eye thereat. What follows? He sees the objects that were hitherto concealed. Make another pin-hole at the opposite corner, five feet away, and the same objects or scene can be viewed in their entirety. This can of course be repeated in all parts of the screen. If at the same time that he is looking through the right-hand upper corner, a camera lens is put through a hole in the centre of the screen, a photograph of all he is looking at through the pinhole will be taken by the camera. This proves that the image of the objects or scene is impressed on or thrown against every part of the screen; and that upon the minutest point, or rather, upon the smallest piece of the screen, will be found a picture in its entirety of the whole object or scene that is before it, as well as a complete picture thrown over the whole body of the screen."

Again, "If five men stand in front of one man ten feet away, each pair of eyes of the five sees the one man; proving that there exists in each separate retina a separate and complete image of the one object." Physiologists admit that images reflected on the retina may somehow be impressed upon the matter of the brain, and remain there for the rest of the life of the owner of that brain, who can at any time call them up as images. In like manner they can be and are impressed around inorganic matter outside the human body everywhere throughout nature, and those images remain there, though it may not be in the form of images, but in some specialized condition of astral-light, capable of being converted again into pictures, and there they remain for all time. This is an adequate answer to the first two queries. In answer to the last we can only postulate that the conditions of space are quite different on a higher plane, which corresponds in a sense with what has been called the fourth dimension of space; and that energy expended on that plane is far more enduring in its effects, than energy expended on the ordinary plane. But the proof lies on the plane in question, and can only be demonstrated to one who has developed his senses on that plane.

A good psychometer can look forward or backward in time, though he does not speak of it as if it were the same thing that it is in our every-day life, as

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* See *Platonist* for January, 1884. Art. "Psychometry." By W. Q. Judge.

measured by chronometers and clocks, but more as different points separate from one another. According as he goes backward or forward in this sense, he can describe one after another scenes which have taken place from a remote antiquity up to the present day, all such scenes, in fact, as have been reflected by the object psychometrized. The following illustration will give an idea of the way a psychometer sees and describes scenes :*—

"*An experiment made with a tertiary fossil, obtained near Calabayal in Cuba, object to be psychometrized wrapped in paper and placed on the subject's head. Mrs. Denton, the psychometer, said :*

"I see streams of water running down the side of a hill; the water is very much charged with foreign matter. There are rocks visible that seem to have been formed by deposit from the water. There are fossils in the rocks, but they differ from any I ever saw before.

"I go back in time, and see a volcano and a shower of fire. There is a long, dark strip of rock from the low ground up to the volcano. The land seems very unstable, rocking and heaving up and sinking down; sometimes appearing above the water and sometimes vanishing beneath. I seem to be on an island. The eastern part is less stable than the western. All the western part is under water now. The island is longer from east to west than from north to south. I think it is south from here. The coast is very angular. I see what would probably be called a barrier reef along the coast, and so regular is a portion of it that it looks artificial.

"The climate is delightful. I seem to be on the north side of the island, west of the centre, and somewhat inland.

"I have a glimpse of a grove, with vines stretching from tree to tree, and naked boys climbing on them.

"Farther south and east is a strip of land richer than here. This seems to have been washed by the sea. There is a kind of point here, and I see what looks like an artificial ditch."

At the time when this examination was made—writes the professor—I did not know on what part of the island of Cuba the specimen was obtained; but on writing to Mr. McDonald, Madison, Wis., from whom I received it, he informed me that "Calabayal is twelve miles south of the city of Havanah, at a point where a railroad crosses a stream, half way between Havanah and Santiago." Then follows an identification of the place described by Mrs. Denton, with the spot from which the specimen had been obtained.

The following is another good case from the same book :—

"Out of nearly two hundred specimens of various kinds, from different parts of the world, wrapped in paper, Mrs. Denton took one, not knowing which it was. She said :—

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* "Soul of Things." By Denton—Vol. i., p. 110.

"I seem to oscillate between the city and a country which is rough and rocky. The buildings in the city being high and the streets being narrow, they look dark. There is a good deal of grandeur about them. The people seem to be busy, and move about as if they had great interest in what was going on. It is not merely an interest in physical matters, either. There seems to be two or three influences in this somewhat different from our own time.

"Now I seem to be in a long room of a large building. At one end the ceiling comes down lower, and is supported by pillars or columns, some of which have broad capitals, that are ornamented by deeply-cut figures.

"I see a large temple. I am standing, I think, in front of it. The entrance is at some distance under a great archway; there are some steps in front going up for some distance. This end of the building seems to be much higher than the other. After passing through the door, I see a part of a very rich building. It seems to be a place of a great deal of ceremony. I feel the influence of the persons about, but they are not as much here as in other parts. The impression I received from this place comes nearer to my idea of a Jewish Synagogue than any other buildings. I feel the influence of priests with long robes on. What a great deal of ceremony there is; but I do not obtain a very strong sense of devotion. They seem to have lost the true devotion in the form of it.

"On one side is a place that, I judge, is for the priest. All the work about it seems plain, but grand. There are no *little* ornaments, but all are substantial. A great effect seems to be produced here by different colours; but it does not seem like paint. I cannot tell what it is. It seems to be inherent in the material itself. In one place I see a gold colour. It seems pure enough to be gold itself. There are either precious stones, or something resembling them. If artificial, there is a great deal of purity about them.

"I see three places that seem made for people to stand in. They are near each other, but separated. Persons seem to stand in them and talk to some one on the other side. I believe this is a Catholic place of worship after all. I feel that influence now. Yes, that is it. There is a place connected with this that is very little ornamented, and seems gloomy. It is very massive and prison like. I see a great many people outside. From this I obtain an idea of what may be done with architecture with sufficient means.

"On examining the paper in which the specimen had been wrapped, I found it marked—Modern Mosaic, Rome. From what part of the eternal city it came from, I am sorry to say I do not know."

This case would not, of course, be sufficient by itself to establish psychometry. For it is impossible to verify most of what the psychometer said. But there is a certain amount of circumstantial evidence contained in it. In the first place, Mrs. D. took the specimen out of a large number, all

similarly wrapped in several layers of paper. Many of them were fossils, bones and geological formations. But she at once became *en rapport* with city buildings. She also described colour effects which seemed not to be produced by paint, but by colour intrinsic in the materials. Furthermore, the place being Rome, it is not improbable that the mosaic should have been in a Catholic place of worship. There is no statement made by the psychometer which can be disproved, or is radically in conflict with what we may conceive to be the probable truth. One such case is not sufficient to prove the truth of psychometry. But there are hundreds of similar cases bearing intrinsic evidence of truth; and they are sufficient to justify us in accepting the theory of psychometry as a working hypothesis on which we may further investigate the subject, and may perchance at length establish it on a scientific basis.

One point which the case in question shows is that not only does the psychometer behold scenes as they appeared in the past, but also the actors as they flitted across the stage, and acts which they performed. This will be more clearly brought out by another case related to me by a friend which also shows how a psychometer goes forward and backward in time:—

A Theosophist dug up near Sihor in Kathiawar some fragments of a skull, in one of which was a round hole. This he wrapped in paper and placed it on the head of a friend, who did not know that he had any psychometric faculty, and indeed ridiculed such things. However, he presently said that he saw a temple by a lake, and described the surrounding scenery. When told to go inside the temple, he described a lingham. He was told to go back (in time), and also to come forward. He described a town at a short distance, and several other things. He then gave an account of an affray which he saw going on, and described the costumes and accoutrements of the combatants, and arrows flying through the air. Then he saw a man fall struck through the head with an arrow, and asked if it was not something from that man which had been put on his head.

The existence of fossil fish-bones and other objects testified to the former existence of a lake in the neighbourhood, and there is considerable probability about the story, but it is useless for scientific purposes, as the man who placed the bone on his friend's head knew what it was, and may have "suggested" by thought-transference his own ideas to his friend. The fact that the surface of bone was not exposed at the time of the fight does not count for anything, as there is a thick layer of astral light surrounding the brain of a man and forming his aura. Some of this might easily have adhered to the fragment of bone, and carried the impress of his latest visions and thoughts.

When a letter is placed on a psychometer's forehead, in his hands, or in some way in contact with him, three things may occur:—(1) He may see and describe the personal appearance of the writer; (2) He may feel and describe

the emotions which animated him when he penned the epistle; and (3) He may read the letter itself, though it be outside the field of vision of his eyes.

The first is what is commonly called clairvoyance. The letter puts the sensitive *en rapport* with the writer, and he evokes the reflection of his image in the astral light, where space, as we understand it, does not exist. A good instance of this happened in the north of India. A party of friends were talking about psychometry, and one of them, a lady, volunteered to try an experiment. A bundle of letters was brought, and one of them placed on the lady's head. She looked for a few moments intently, as if gazing into space, and all of a sudden burst out laughing. When asked what she was laughing at, she said she saw just the top of a man's head covered with short, dark hair sticking straight up. Presently she saw the the rest of him, and said: "Why! It's little————," naming a professor, who was personally known to her, but whom she had not seen for a long time. She was quite right. Of the second phenomenon a number of cases are given by Dr. Buchanan in his book.* But the objection may justly be raised that the doctor knew the contents and who were the writers of the letters. However, the following has been selected as bearing evidence of not having been transmitted through the doctor's mind, but direct from the writer's aura which clung about the letter. The subject himself wrote an account of his sensations on the spot in his memorandum-book in the following words:—

"He (Dr. B.) placed a folded letter with the sealed side only seen on the table, and requested me to place my right hand upon it. The experiment seemed to me preposterous; but I remarked that whatever, if any, sensation followed I should truly communicate it. I felt nothing in my frame at the moment, but very soon an increasing, unusual heat in the palm of my hand; this was followed by a prickling sensation, commencing in my fingers' ends, and passing gradually over the top of my hand and up the outside of my arm. I felt for nearly a minute no change in my mental condition, and stated this. Dr. Buchanan had given no hint of the nature or author of any letter he had with him—and I had no bias or subject on my mind from the day's experience to influence me. A rush of sadness, solemnity, and distress suddenly came over me; my thoughts were confused and yet rapid—and I mentioned there is trouble and sorrow here. I could not have remembered anything more than a general impression of it after the letter was removed.

"Another letter was laid upon the table under my hand. My first sensations were sharper and stronger than before, passing up in the same manner from my fingers' ends. In less than a minute my whole arm became violently agitated, and I yielded to an irresistible impulse to give utterance to my thoughts and feelings. A determined, self-confident, daring, and triumphant feeling suggested the language I used, and it seemed to me that I could have

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* "Psychometry."

gone on triumphantly to the accomplishment of any purpose, however subtle or strong might be the opposition to be overcome. My whole frame was shaken, my strength wrought up at the highest tension, my face and arm burned, and near the close of my description (which was also taken down as in other hands), when I retouched the letter after repeated removals of my hand by Dr. B. in consequence of my great excitement, it was like touching fire which ran to my very toes."

The former letter was one written by a person in great grief at the loss of a relative. The latter was an important political letter written by General Jackson. Probably the vibration in the aura of the letters was taken up by the nerve-aura of the sensitive—as one tuning-fork takes up the vibration of another in its immediate neighbourhood—and was conducted by the aura surrounding the nerves of his arm to that of the spinal cord, and thence to the head, where the brain in its capacity of a sensory ganglion registered the vibration in terms of moral sensation, and as such made it manifest to the normal consciousness.

The third case—reading the letter itself—is (*a*) a power possessed by occultists, (*b*) it can be done by some sensitives when in the somnambulic trance. Both these cases are beside the subject of the present paper.

Mrs. Buchanan psychologized many letters correctly. She preferred to hold them in her hands without an envelope, as a sealed letter conveyed impressions of suspicion on the part of the sender. In some instances, however, she psychometrized closed letters under fair test conditions. On one occasion she received a letter to psychometrize sealed with five seals, and at first declined to try it; but, subsequently consenting, she gave a minute description, which she sent with the sealed letter to her correspondent, who wrote a long letter detailing the minuteness of her description. One curious point about it was that it was written by two people; and Mrs. B. said, "I am constantly taken to the sphere of another person who is interested in the writer; there is such a blending that I am unable to feel clearly each distinct individuality."

Human hair is highly charged with the aura of the head from which it was cut, and is thus more powerful in producing impressions than a letter.

Some persons have the faculty of seeing panoramic views of society in days gone by pass rapidly before them when holding some personal object, such as a ring, article of dress (mummy-cloth, for instance), or a fragment of furniture, or an ancient weapon. But more conclusive experiments than are at present available are required before we can make a full analysis of this branch of the subject. A friend of the writer has this faculty developed to such an extent that, in passing through some of the older London streets, which were once fashionable, but are now devoted to lodging-houses and the residences of small tradesmen, he sometimes sees gay equipages drive up to the doors, and discharge their shadowy occupants, powdered and wigged, and decked in the finery of past periods. A weapon will bring back before the eyes the deeds which

have been committed by its agency. But it may sometimes cause most unpleasant sensations. For instance, in an experiment performed in the Odessa branch of the Theosophical Society, a fragment of rope on which a man had hanged himself was given to the sensitive. This produced such a painful and repulsive influence on the mind of the psychometer, who was entirely ignorant of the nature of the object, that the experiment had to be discontinued.

A good example of clothing psychometrized is given by a writer before alluded to.*

"I received from a friend, in the year 1882, a piece of the linen wrapping of an Egyptian ibis found on the breast of a mummy. I handed it wrapped up in tissue paper to a friend, who did not know what, if anything, was in the paper. He put it to his forehead, and soon began to describe Egyptian scenery; then an ancient city; from that he went on to describe a man in Egyptian clothes, sailing on a river; then this man went ashore into a grove, where he killed a bird; then that the bird looked like pictures of the ibis, and ended by describing the man as returning with the bird to the city, the description of which tallied with the pictures and descriptions of ancient Egyptian cities."

The case of Bishop Polk, who tasted brass or other metals from contact with his hand, has already been alluded to. This faculty of tasting by contact is not confined to metallic substances. Acid and alkali, sweet and sour, can be readily distinguished by a psychometer, and in many cases substances named, when held in the hand—if solids, wrapped in paper, if liquids, contained in phials, —such, for instance, as sugar, vinegar, salt, pepper, mustard, cloves, and other spices. All such substances have their appropriate auras, which act through the nerve-aura of the sensitive. A number of instances might be quoted, but the case of the Bishop sufficiently illustrates this branch of the subject.

The subject of taste naturally leads us on to that of medicines, which is one of the most interesting branches of psychometry, as it has an important bearing on the science of Therapeutics. Also, considerable attention has of late been devoted to it. It has even gained the notice of French physicians, who may be said to lead the fashion in Europe in the electro-biological branches of medicine, as the Germans do in physiology, and the English in surgery.

The first record which we find of this Therapeutic action of the aura of drugs is in Dr. Buchanan's book, which contains a document signed by forty-three out of a class of about one hundred and thirty medical students, who psychometrically experienced impressions of the actions of different *materia medica* specimens enveloped in paper, and held in the hand, whilst they sat listening to a lecture. The substances were in most cases well-known drugs with powerful actions—such as emetics, cathartics, and soporifics; and it was necessary that they should be, for if the students had not previously experienced their

* *Platonist*, "Psychometry," by W. Q. Judge.

actions upon their own bodies, they could not be expected to recognise them psychometrically.

In *La Semaine Médicale* for August, 1885, there is an article on this subject by Doctors Bourru and Burot, of the French Marine Hospital at Rochefort, and in a pamphlet published by them in 1886 under the title *La Grande Hysterie chez l'Homme*, there is a further account of their researches. In making experiments in metalloscopy, or the action of metals applied to the body of a patient they discovered that with a certain hystero-epileptic patient suffering from partial paralysis and loss of sensation, gold caused a burning, not only when in contact with the body, but also from a distance of some inches; and that iodide of potassium caused sneezing and yawning.

They tried other metals, and found that a plate of copper on the right forearm caused first a trembling of the forearm, then of the whole arm; that platinum on the side of the patient which was paralysed caused a violent itching and made him scratch himself; that steel caused a transfer of the paralysis from one side to the other, with accelerated and laboured respiration. Continuing their experiments they found certain substances produced a marked effect, others did not. Amongst the latter were silver, lead, zinc, glass, etc. Amongst the former were the metals alluded to above. Then they tried vegetable drugs, and found that opium applied to the head produced profound sleep. At first they made their experiments with the drugs in contact with the skin, but subsequently found that their results were more reliable without contact, as the application of many of the drugs to the skin caused a local action which masked the general action. The following method was adopted:—The medicinal substance, whether solid or liquid, was placed in a test-tube, which was then enveloped in paper, so that neither the doctors nor the patient could see what was contained in it. The tube thus prepared was placed two or three inches from some part of the body, generally the hand or nape of the neck, but sometimes covered parts of the body, such as the back. The action of the drug could also be determined by placing it beneath the patient's pillow. When the experiments were made the subject was in his normal state of consciousness. As the experimenters did not know what drug they were giving, "suggestion" was impossible.

The action of a drug generally commenced about two or three minutes after the test-tube was placed near the part of the body chosen for the experiment. It was found necessary to dilute powerful drugs, for they caused toxic symptoms, and their action was so violent as to make it impossible to watch the medicinal effect. Most drugs were found to produce first of all a more or less violent reaction of the nervous system, which soon passed off; the symptoms due to the specific action of the drug then appeared.

*Narcotics*—all produced sleep, but each had its own appropriate character. Opium caused immediately a deep sleep with regular breathing and normal

pulse. The patient could not be awakened. Chloral produced a snoring sleep, from which the patient could easily be aroused by blowing on his eyes. Morphine was similar in its action to opium. Several other narcotics were tried; and the symptoms they occasioned were recorded.

*Emetics and Purgatives*—were tried, and produced the symptoms characteristic of the drugs used.

*Alcohols*—produced very distinct symptoms. Ethyl-alcohol almost immediately brought on immobility. The patient's eyes were half closed and his body swayed about. He got up and hiccoughed, walking with stumbling gait, dancing, and singing bacchanalian songs in a drunken voice. Presently he laid himself at full length on the ground, eructated and vomited. At last he fell into a deep and heavy sleep. On awakening, he hiccoughed, complained of headache and the taste of brandy, and said that he must have been drunk. He had not been accustomed to strong drinks. In the case of a woman who was used to alcohol the drunkenness was not so pronounced. Champagne caused a merry intoxication, with skipping and sexual excitement. Pure amyl-alcohol brought on furious drunkenness. The subject beat his breast and tried to bite. His rage lasted twenty minutes, and could not be stopped by compression of the eyes, camphor, or ammonia. He believed that he was fighting with brigands who were trying to cut his throat. Pure absinthe tried with a female caused some excitement at first. Then she tore her hair like a mad woman. Then she raised herself up and wanted to walk, but could not, as her legs were paralysed.

Antispasmodics produced a very different effect. Orange flower water caused the patient to fall suddenly into a calm and tranquil sleep, which came on naturally, and without fatigue. Camphor caused, first, contraction of all the muscles, then complete relaxation of them with sleep. Cherry-laurel water had a most extraordinary effect on a woman. She fell at once into a state of religious ecstasy, which lasted more than a quarter of an hour. She raised her eyes and stretched her hands towards the heavens, her whole attitude being one of beatitude. Her eyes were suffused with tears. She fell on her knees, bowed her head and clasped her hands before her lips in an attitude of prayer. Soon she prostrated herself in adoration, and wept with her head touching the ground; her expression varied in accordance with her posture, portraying adoration, supplication, repentance, and prayer. Then she fell on her back, and convulsive movements of the chest came on, her face expressing pain. At last she fell into a calm sleep. On being somnambulized and questioned, she said that she had seen Mary the Holy Virgin, clothed in a blue robe with stars of gold. Her hair was fair and her figure plump. She looked so good and sweet that she would like always to see her. That unfortunately she was not of her religion. The Virgin reproached her for leading a disorderly life and told her to pray that she might change her conduct; then gave her a blessing, and lastly threw her on her back for being

a sinner. On awakening, the woman, who was a Jewess of loose morals, mocked those who spoke to her of the Virgin. When the experiment was repeated it always produced a similar result. It was found to be the essential oil in the cherry-laurel which produced the ecstasy and the hydrocyanic acid which produced the convulsions. Many other drugs were tried with marked success; amongst others valerian, which caused in two patients great excitement and strange symptoms similar to those which it produced in cats. The subject capered about and loudly snuffed up the air through the nostrils; then scratched a hole in the ground with both hands and tried to put his face in it. If the valerian was hidden he found it by snuffing; and having found it threw himself on it, scratching and biting the ground.

In their experiments with drugs the doctors were able to distinguish two distinct actions, psychical and physical or bodily. The former consisted in hallucinations of a variable nature, which were probably special to the patient; the latter were constant, and consisted in salivation, vomiting, sleep, intestinal contraction, sweating, etc., etc., etc., the appropriate symptoms of the drugs employed.

Experiments with medicinal substances are extremely interesting and will probably prove of service in the advancement of medical science, but they should never be attempted by any but a medical man who is well versed in the physiological actions and uses of drugs. Otherwise a great danger would be incurred. Besides, the experiments would be valueless from a scientific point of view, for no one without special training can accurately record symptoms, any more than a man who is not an engineer can manage the engines of a ship, and understand in what respect they are out of order when they go wrong.

It would appear from the foregoing account that it was the aura of the drugs which acted upon the patients through their aura, or astral body, which, according to the testimony of clairvoyants and sensitives, is always deranged or weak, frequently paler than is normal, or of a different colour, in places where the physical body is diseased or weak. It is claimed for mesmeric healing that it restores tone to these weak or discoloured portions of the astral body, and that the physical body soon recovers, following the changes that take place in the astral counterpart. This suggests the idea that in homœopathic medicines, triturated to an extreme decimal, it is the aura of the drug which operates on the patient's aura. Certainly a number of sensitive persons have told the writer that homœopathic remedies suited their constitutions, whereas strong-bodied people with no physical sensitiveness have told him that no homœopathic dose ever produced the slightest symptom in them.

It would be very interesting if Indian medical men would report the results of testing psychometrically the auric influences of *Kusa* grass, *pepul*, *tulsi*, and other grasses, leaves, and woods connected with religious ceremonies.

As the physiological actions of drugs have been discussed, a few words on certain extremely unpleasant effects which may be produced in a psychometer by shells may not be out of place. The fact in question was discovered by a Mr. Jones, of London, who verified his results by experiments with four different sensitive subjects. He says* that he was first drawn to the inquiry by the circumstance of a female, to whom his son was showing his conchological collection, complaining of pains while holding one of the shells. His method of experimenting was simply to place one in the subject's hand: the *Purpura cocolatum* in about four minutes produced contraction of the fingers and painful rigidity of the arm, which effects were removed by quick passes without contact from the shoulder off at the fingers. One day he purchased about thirty shells. In the evening he tried twelve of them, one of which caused acute pain in the arm and head, followed by insensibility. He removed the patient to a sofa, took the shells off the table, and placed them on a side-board. In a short time, to his astonishment, the patient, while still insensible, gradually raised her clasped hands, turning towards the shells on the side-board, and pointing at them with outstretched arms. He put down her hands, but she raised them again. He had her removed to another room, separated from that containing the shells by a nine-inch wall, a passage, and a lath and plaster wall; yet, strange to say, the phenomenon of raising the hands and bending the body in the direction of the shells was repeated. He then had the shells removed to a back room, and subsequently to three other places, one of which was out of the house. At each removal the position of the hands altered according to the new position of the shells. The patient continued insensible with a short intermission till the evening of the fourth day. On the third day, the arm of the hand that had held the shells was swollen, spotted, and dark-coloured. On the morning of the next day, those appearances had gone, and only a slight discolouration of the hand remained. The shells that acted most powerfully were the *Cinder murex* and the *Chama macrophylla.* Mr. Jones experimented with another sensitive shortly after this occurrence, but did not use the most powerful shells. She was similarly affected, but not so severely; and only remained in a state of torpor for a few hours—in her own words, she "felt cold, contraction of the hand, shiver right through me, pain up the arm, pain in the eyes and head, dizzy feeling."

On the use of psychometry in the diagnosis of disease, much has been written, but mostly by people who were ignorant of medical science; consequently their testimony is of but little evidential value. However, we may take two hypotheses to work upon, but whether they will stand the test of further and more critical investigation it is at present impossible to say:—

(1) That a psychometer can, by holding a patient's hand or some object belonging to him, by deep and benevolent sympathy subjectively identify him-

* See "Mesmerism," by Dr. Williams, M.A.

self with the sick man and vibrate in consonance with him, so to speak, to the extent of feeling in his own body the pains felt by the patient; and by this method can say what organ is perverted from performing its normal function.

(2) That a psychometer, when more or less abstracted from surrounding objects and concentrating his attention on the patient, can with his psychic eye—"the eye of Rudra" of the Eastern mystic writings, said to be situated above and in front of the space between the eyes—see the astral counterpart of his patient's body, and from that form a diagnosis concerning the nature and location of the disease.

In most of the recorded cases, such as those of Puysegur, Du Potet, and Cahagnet, the psychometer was previously psychometrized, or thrown into a state of trance. A further difficulty is in the fact that the character of medical science has changed, that the fashion, if we may so call it, in disease, drugs, and medical terminology has passed through many phases since the day when these old adepts in psychology gave out the results of their researches. No new works on the subject have been written of late years by men whose testimony s worthy of credence.

One reliable case is known to the writer, in which both the psychometer and the sensitive were acquaintances of his. The former, a private gentleman, who had trained for some years the psychic senses which he had possessed all his life, saw the aura of the patient as a pale blue ethereal substance. Without knowing the seat of disease, he described the aura of that locality as appearing to him yellowish and muddled. At best this but shows the seat of disease—not the nature of it. Psychometry must do much more than that if it is to supersede the accepted methods of medical diagnosis, which its more devoted adherents claim that it should, and will eventually do.

A good plan for ascertaining who does and who does not possess the psychometric faculty is to place a number of letters in plain envelopes and distribute them to a number of friends who are interested in the subject and willing to assist in the experiments. Tell them to hold the letters given to them on the top of the head, on the forehead, or in the hand, and to sit quietly for a few minutes—with the mind as far as possible made negative. Tell them if any thought or emotion bubbles up, so to speak, in the mind, that they are to describe it. Take, say, half-a-dozen of those whose results are the best, and, by a process of natural selection and survival of the fittest, the best two or three psychometers may be selected.

As a general rule, persons of highly strung nervous organization make the best psychometers. It is important to select persons of intelligence and education, as the ignorant cannot always clearly express what they feel or see. For the most part, women are better for the purpose than men, but this is far from being a universal rule. Persons of a very positive disposition can seldom "sense" things. An intelligent child makes a good psychometer for the simpler

experiments, if not too restless and fidgety. If persons on the first trial do not succeed as well as might be desired, it may be due to the strangeness and novelty of the experiment, which distracts their thoughts and prevents them from becoming passive and impressionable. If they manifest any signs of possessing the faculty, it is worth while to try them every day for some time, as practice may develop their power to a remarkable degree. It is often necessary for them to find out how to use their psychic sense. This also applies to thought-transference. Psychic organs, if we may so call them, may be developed and made strong by regular and appropriate exercise and training for their sphere of action, as the limbs of an athlete for running, jumping, and the like. And, similarly, no amount of training will make a really good athlete or psychometer of a man who is not born with a physique suited to the one or the other. Furthermore, in both cases, a suitable diet is a matter of importance.

To develop receptivity, a light diet is advisable. It is better to give up alcohol and butcher's meat. This is no great hardship to a psychometer as a rule, for many psychics have a natural aversion to strong meats and strong drinks. Some letter or personal object, strougly imbued with the writer's or owner's magnetism, does very well to begin with, and gradually the psychometer may be led on to objects which have not so strong an influence. A quarter to half an hour with several intervals is quite long enough for a sitting. And this may be done every day for a considerable time. But psychics should be carefully watched, and, if any suspicious symptoms occur, all experiments should at once be broken off for a time, however interesting they may be, and the sensitive should be urged to lead an energetic life, taking an active interest in the pursuit of daily life, never allowing his or her mind to be passive. For, if receptivity be carried too far, the door may be opened to outside influences of an evil tendency.

The following rules for conducting experiments may possibly be found useful by the reader who wishes to put the question to a practical test :—

I. The best number of persons is three, one to psychometrize, one to hand the objects, and one to record in a notebook everything as it occurs.

II. The psychometer should sit in a comfortable chair, his own if possible, as otherwise he may psychometrize some one who sat in it previously; the back of it should be long enough to support his head. If he can work with bandaged eyes, so much the better, as it prevents distraction by surrounding objects. Many prefer to work in this way.

III. Wrap a number of the objects to be used in paper, making them look as much alike as possible, so that no one in the room can distinguish one from the other. The paper should be new, just taken from a packet, as otherwise some person who has handled it may be psychometrized.

IV. It is a good plan for the one whose duty it is to pass the objects to sit or stand behind the psychometer's chair, and to place the objects on the top of

the subject's head, holding them there until he takes them in his own hand and disposes them according to his fancy.

V. If no effect is produced by one object, take a rest for a few minutes, then try another object.

VI. Do not talk while the experiments are actually going on; but between them it is good to talk sufficiently to keep the psychometer from getting wearied, the objects already psychometrized being the best subject for conversation.

VII. A warm dry climate is the best for psychical experiments; and there should be no metal ornaments on the psychometer, or objects in his immediate vicinity.

It is not always easy to think of objects for experimentation, so perhaps the following list may be found useful as a groundwork, the particulars being filled in according to circumstances.

I. *Personal* :—as letters, hair, apparel, jewellery.

II. *Antiquities* :—as fabrics, ornaments, manuscripts (papyri, black-letter books, etc.), ancient weapons and musical instruments, etc., etc.

III. *Fossils* :—of animals and plants from different places, the localities being known.

IV. *Geological objects of different periods and localities* :—as stones, metals, lava, etc.; also stones from buildings.

V. *Coins* :—old and new.

VI. *Books*:—[it is claimed that every book has its aura. If so it is probably imparted by the people who read the book. If an old book were found to have an effect on a psychometer, it would be interesting to try if a new, unread one would equally affect him.]

VII. *Photographs* :—of persons, of paintings, and of views. [They should not, however, have been handled, or even looked at by a number of people.]

It is of the utmost importance that everything should be recorded as it occurs. For the human memory is treacherous. It would take a Stokes or Loisette to carry in his head the details of a whole series of similar experiments; and hearsay evidence is of no practical value. It is of the utmost importance that no one in the room should know the object of the experiment, in order to preclude the possibility of "suggestion," which may be employed unintentionally.

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# THOUGHT TRANSFERENCE.

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# THEOSOPHY AND THE PRESENT AGE.

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# THOUGHT TRANSFERENCE.

By far the most exhaustive and satisfactory experiments in thought-transference are those which were performed by or under the auspices of the Psychical Research Society of London. Any one, who wishes to study a vast collection of cases and statistical tables, cannot do better than read the numerous reports which have been issued by that Society. As, however, these reports are not within the reach of many of the Indian branches of the Theosophical Society, a certain number of cases, typifying the different branches of the subject, will be here quoted for their benefit and guidance in experimenting.

As regards a hypothesis to explain the nature of the transfer, the Psychical Society do not postulate one, though they discuss the various theories of muscle-reading, nervous induction, brain-waves, etc. In an article on the subject in the Report for July, 1884, Oliver J. Lodge, D.Sc., Professor of Physics in University College, Liverpool, comes very near the auric theory; he says:—

"In using the term 'thought-transference' I would ask to be understood as doing so for convenience, because the observed facts can conveniently be grouped under such a title. . . . . If I held any theory on the subject I should be more guarded in my language, and require many words to set it forth. As it is, the phrase describes correctly enough what appears to take place, viz., that one person may, under favourable conditions, receive a faint impression of a thing which is strongly present in the mind, or thought, or sight, or sensorium of another person not in contact, and may be able to describe or draw it more or less correctly. But how the transfer takes place, or whether there is any transfer at all, or what is the physical reality underlying the terms 'mind,' 'consciousness,' 'impression,' and the like; and whether this thing we call mind is located in the person or in the space around him, or in both or neither, . . . . . I have no hypothesis whatever. I may, however, be permitted to suggest a rough and crude analogy. That the brain is the organ of consciousness is patent, but that consciousness is located in the brain is what no psychologist ought to assert; for just as the energy of an electric charge, though apparently on the conductor, is not on the conductor, but in all the space around it; just as the energy of an electric current, though apparently in the copper wire, is

certainly not all in the copper wire, and possibly not any of it, so it may be that the sensory consciousness of a person, though apparently located in the brain, may be conceived of as also existing like a faint echo in space, or in other brains, though these are ordinarily too busy and preoccupied to notice it."

Although this shows that physiologists have not yet demonstrated the existence of an aura surrounding the nervous centres of man, and connected with the universal aura surrounding our globe, yet it contains no statement which militates against such a theory.

Two persons are necessary to carry out any experiment in thought-transference. They are commonly termed the Agent and the Percipient. The former concentrates his mind upon the figure, number, colour, or picture, *i.e.*, on whatever he wishes to transfer, forms a visual image of it, generally at a short distance in front of his face—in his aura, as a matter of fact—then by an act of volition drives this image, or whatever else it may be, over to the percipient—in whose aura the impression is received. The latter keeps his mind as negative or passive as possible, the aura being plastic with that condition of mind. Presently the thought, figure, or colour, comes up in his consciousness, whence, or in what manner, he is unable to say; or in some cases a picture of it may arise, as it seems to him, before his mind, more or less vividly; or it occurs to him to perform some action, he knows not why; indeed, he does not reason about it, for he is keeping his mind as passive and impressionable as possible. The percipient may have his eyes bandaged and his ears plugged. In many cases he prefers being blindfolded, as he is not then distracted by surrounding objects. The stress of work falls on the agent. For to concentrate the mind upon a given object, or more especially to keep a sustained visual image of it in the "mind's eye" for two or three minutes, requires a very considerable expenditure of energy. There are comparatively few men who can repeat the process many times at a sitting. The work of the percipient is comparatively easy, if he has the necessary capacity, which is not possessed by every one in a sufficient degree for successful experimenting: it is not necessary for him to be in a condition even bordering upon trance; but simply to sit in a state of quiet expectancy, waiting to catch any idea that may come to him. Success depends mainly upon these two qualities—concentration on the part of the agent, and sensitiveness, or impressionability, on the part of the percipient.

In some cases a screen is placed between the two. A picture is placed on the side of the screen facing the agent, but which cannot be seen by the percipient. The former fixes his attention upon this picture, and endeavours to transmit it to the mind of the latter.

If several persons are in the room, the experiments are found to be more successful if they all think of the object. The explanation of this may be that the collective concentration of several reasons impresses the image or thought more powerfully on the mind of the sensitive, or merely that it prevents them

from thinking of other objects and involuntarily impressing them upon the sensitive, thereby distracting him, and interfering with the work of the agent. It is not unreasonable, however, to suppose that several agents thinking of the same object might give it a confused appearance to the sensitive, for they would be unlikely to make their visual images of the same size, and some of them would be likely to form very bad images or only images of some part of the object at a time. For as Galton has shown in his "Inquiry into the Human Faculty," many persons cannot clearly visualise an object; either it comes or goes, or is very dim; or they can only see a portion of it at a time.

A good idea of the manner in which this faculty may be developed in a family may be obtained from a paper on the subject written by the Rev. A. M. Creery, B.A., whose daughters were amongst the best percipients tried by the Committee of the S. P. R. ". . . . I resolved to investigate the whole question of the action of mind on mind. For this purpose I employed four of my children between the ages of ten and sixteen, all being in perfectly robust health, and a maid servant about twenty years of age. Each went out of the room in turn while I and others fixed on some object which the absent one was to name on returning to the room. After a few trials the successes predominated so much over the failures that we were all convinced that there was something very wonderful coming under our notice. Night after night for several months we spent an hour or two each evening in varying the conditions of the experiments and choosing new subjects for thought-transference. We began by selecting the simplest objects in the room; then chose names of towns, names of people, dates, cards out of a pack, lines from different poems, etc., in fact, any things or series of ideas that those present could keep steadily before their minds; and when the children were in a good humour and excited by the wonderful nature of their successful guessing, they very seldom made a mistake. I have seen seventeen cards chosen by myself named right in succession without any mistake. We soon found that a great deal depended upon the steadiness with which the ideas were kept before the minds of the thinkers, and upon the energy with which they willed the ideas to pass. . . . . .

"I may say that this faculty is not by any means confined to members of one family; it is much more general than we imagine. To verify this conclusion I invited two of our neighbour's children to join us in our experiments. On the first evening they were rather diffident, and did not succeed; on the second they improved; and on the third they were still better. . . . . .

"The distance between the thinkers and the thought-reader is of considerable consequence. As a rule, the best results take place when the distance is not more than a yard or two; but under very favourable mental conditions we have often had four or five cards named right in succession, while the thought-reader was placed in a room on a landing above that in which the thinkers were assembled.

"On questioning the children as to the *mode* by which they form their judgment of the ideas that came before their minds, I find all agreed in this. Two or three ideas of objects of the class with which we are experimenting come before their minds, and after a few moments' reflection they select that which stands out with the greatest vividness. At present we are not in a position to theorize very far on this subject, still we cannot help asking ourselves the question: How are the motions of the brains of the thinkers communicated to the brain of the thought-reader? Is there such a thing as direct action between mind and mind? Or are 'brain waves' set up in some intervening medium, either in the luminiferous ether or in a nerve atmosphere developed at the time in the cerebra of the thinkers, by which the corresponding idea is called up in the mind of the thought-reader? . . . . ."

These queries have been already discussed and answered, but they are interesting as showing how near Mr. Creery, who had in all probability never heard of the occult theory of aura and astral light, came to the conception of them by his own independent reasoning or intuition. His paper shows how experiments in thought-transference, so far from being a wearisome labour, may form a pleasant occupation in which a family may pass an hour or two every evening, and occasionally entertain their neighbours by a display of their skill.

To discover what members of a family make the best percipients, it is only necessary for them to take turns, and one go out of the room, while the rest think of an object. It will soon be manifest who are the most successful thought-readers. It will generally be found that children and females are the best, though amongst them some will be better than others.

Success is far more easy to obtain if there be contact between the agent and percipient, either by the hands or by one of the agent's hands placed lightly on the head, neck, back, or some other part of the percipient's body (outside his clothes). Such contact is advisable in the earlier experiments, but should be gradually discontinued as they proceed, and greater facility of transference is obtained. As a stepping-stone between contact and non-contact it is a good plan for agent and percipient to hold opposite ends of a stick, then of a slack piece of wire.* If success follows their efforts with only the slight con-

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* Some very striking experiments in thought-transference through a long coil of copper wire were, in 1874, successfully made in the Sheffield School of Yale University, in America, by Professor W. H. Brewer and his colleagues; the percipient being a Mr. J. R. Brown. The agent being placed in the cellar and the percipient in the amphitheatre, three floors above, and a copper wire laid on between the two, the latter mentally read and executed orders mentally communicated by the former. Among others, the agent—Professor Porter, if my memory serves—willed that Mr. Brown should take a piece of chalk lying on top of the blackboard and place it somewhere else in the room. The widest publicity was given to the facts at the time, but I have none of the printed records with me here in India for reference.—H. S. O.

nection of the wire, there is very little doubt but that they will soon succeed even without that frail link. The Committee on Thought-transference of the S. P. R. have most emphatically stated their opinion "that wherever contact is permitted, success in the performance of the desired action must be attributed to indications given by the 'willer'—that his unconscious and involuntary variations in pressure are unconsciously and involuntarily, or consciously and voluntarily interpreted by the percipient. The same objection naturally applies to all cases where the subject *writes down* something which is in the agent's mind—the *action*, due to unconscious guidance, being then the movements of the pencil or chalk." Now, whilst we quite admit that much may be done in the way of perceiving by muscular pressure the directions involuntarily given by the agent, we do not believe that for the more complicated actions they afford a sufficient explanation, and even in the case of the more simple we believe that they frequently play but a small part. The public performer Cumberland is probably nearer the mark when he ascribes his performance to a natural gift which he possesses. That is about as near as an uneducated man would be likely to get to an idea of the way in which the thoughts were transmitted to him. In the majority of cases what is gained by contact is in all probability synchronicity of vibration between the agent and the percipient. Their minds, or rather their auras, are, so to speak, tuned alike: so that, if a certain note is struck on one, the other immediately takes it up, as is the case of two tuning forks; or, if a note is sounded near a piano, it is taken up by the strings, which when struck have the same length of vibration, or in other words sound the same note.

It is an interesting fact to which attention was drawn by Dr. Salzer in a letter to the *Statesman* on the occasion of Cumberland's visit to Calcutta, that animals—*e.g.*, ants, bees, beetles, birds, pigs, rats, and horses—can apparently impart information to each other by the contact of certain parts of their bodies.*

There is every reason to believe, as argued by Butler, that what he calls instinct, a natural power of perception closely allied to thought-reading, was highly developed in man before the growth of language; but that it has naturally fallen into little more than a potential faculty through disuse. So what is required for thought-transference is not so much the development of a new faculty as the revival of one well-nigh obsolete. Synchronicity of vibration—and consequently the faculty of thought-transference—is frequently found to be developed naturally to a considerable extent in persons who live together in close sympathy, having the same objects in life and thinking the same thoughts, as often happens in the case of husband and wife, mother and daughter, or two friends living together. In some extreme cases it would almost seem as if there were one mind common to the two. The same thoughts

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* Further information on this subject can be found in "Ants, Bees, and Wasps," by Sir John Lubbock, and "Animal Intelligence," by Romanes.

frequently occur to both simultaneously, or the same musical air, or the idea of performing the same act. When they are separated, if one is ill or in trouble, an unaccounable depression is not infrequently experienced by the other. Experiments in thought-transference may be arranged in various ways. The following classification has been made more or less arbitrarily according to the nature of the thoughts transferred, and may be found useful by persons conducting experiments; but at the same time it must be kept in mind that there is only one method of thought-transference which holds good for all the classes.

I. The Transference of Directions.
   The "Willing" game, Pin finding, etc.

II. The Transference of Visual Impressions.
   (*a.*) Of Form—*e.g.*, Objects, Numbers, Geometric Figures Pictures, etc.
   (*b.*) Of Colour.

III. The Transference of Sensation.
   (*a.*) Physical—*e.g.*, Pain, Taste, Smell.
   (*b.*) Mental and Moral—*e.g.*, Anxiety, Fear, etc.

IV. The Transference of Words, Names, Sentences, Tunes, Concrete Ideas, such as Historical Scenes, Apparitions [not the partially materialized double, but only the subjective impression of seeing it, caused telepathically by an act of volition on the part of the agent], etc.

V. Abstract Thoughts and Ideas.

I. *The Transference of Directions.*—This is one of the simplest kinds of thought-transference, and for that reason it forms a good starting point for persons who have had no previous experience in such experiments. In the form of the "willing" game it may readily be practised with children, because it is almost certain to be successful, and thus to inspire them with confidence, which is a great point gained, and also because they take great interest and pleasure in the experiments, which will carry them on to such other trials of skill as do not to the same extent partake of the nature of a game. The following is the message which was adopted by the Odessa Branch of the T. S. It has the advantage of showing what members of the family are sensitive.

The person who is to act the passive part is chosen by those assembled, and then leaves the room until it has been decided what his task shall be. The agent is also selected by mutual assent, and in this way all the members are tried both as agent and percipient. Contact is made by placing one hand on the neck of the sensitive. The tasks chosen to be accomplished in their experiments were for the most part of a simple character, such as finding a pin, or other object hidden in some part of the room, or discovering an object without knowing what it was; but success was also obtained in more com-

plicated problems; as, for instance, on one occasion, it was required to take a bundle of seven similar keys out of the pocket of the host, to pick out that belonging to one of the three book-cases standing in the room, to open it, take a certain book from one of the shelves, bring the book to the table at the other end of the room, and open it at a certain page. This somewhat complicated experiment was successfully performed, the subject being blindfolded and having no previous idea of the sort of thing he was expected to do. He did not manifest the least hesitation, but got through the whole performance in about seven minutes. The members of this branch found that about eighty per cent. of their experiments were completely successful, and only about eight per cent. were total failures.

II.—*The Transference of Visual Impressions.*—This is a large and inclusive category. Since sight is the sense which we use most extensively in every-day life, we are apt to refer everything to sight; and so closely is this sense allied to that of thought, that, as shown by Galton, many persons first *see* an idea in a definite shape, and, it may be, in colours of definite hues. But this is beside the question, for we are now dealing with the transference of the picture of objects in black and white or in colours from one mind to another. From an abundance of experiments we will cite some:—

(*a.*) *Form.*—"Professor Hopkinson and I (Professor Balfour Stewart) went to the house of the Rev. A. M. Creery at Buxton. There were present besides Mr. Creery, Miss Mary Creery, Miss Alice, Miss Emily, Miss Maud, Miss Kathleen (children); and the servant Jane.

After a few preliminary trials, the following guesses were made, the guesser going out of the room until some object was thought of by the company, when she came in and tried to guess what object was in the thoughts of all. No questions were asked nor observations made by the company. (No contact.)

*First.—Definite objects thought of.*

1. *Pipe.*—Alice guessed plate, paper, then pipe.
2. *Fork.*—Maud guessed it at once.
3. *Cup.*—Emily guessed it at once.
4. *Corkscrew.*—Jane guessed it at once.
5. *Tongs.*—Miss Mary guessed fire-irons, and then poker.

*Second.—Cards thought of.*

6. *Three of Clubs.*—Jane guessed three of Spades, then three of Clubs.
7. *Queen of Clubs.*—Miss Mary guessed three of diamonds.
8. *Four of Clubs.*—Maud guessed five of Clubs, then four of Clubs.
9. *Ace of Diamonds.*—Jane guessed ace of Clubs, then ace of Diamonds.
10. *King of Spades.*—Jane guessed four of Diamonds, then six of Diamonds.

11. *King of Hearts.*—Maud guessed knave of Hearts, then king of Hearts.
12. *Ace of Spades.*—Maud guessed right at once.
13. *King of Diamonds.*—Profesor Stewart tried and guessed ten of Diamonds.
14. *Three of Diamonds.*—Mary guessed right at once.
15. *Ace of Hearts.*—Alice guessed right at once.
16. *King of Clubs.*—Professsor Hopkinson tried and guessed knave of Spades, then four of Hearts.
17. Mr. Creery and Professor Stewart tried, but could not guess.

*Third.—Numbers thought of.*

18. *Forty-eight thought of.*—Jane guessed 34, 44, 84.
19. *Sixty-seven thought of.*—Miss Mary guessed 66, then 67.
20. *Fifty-five thought of.*—Maud guessed 54, 56, then 55.
21. *Eighty-one thought of.*—Alice guessed 71, then 81.
22. *Thirty-one thought of.*—Emily did not guess it.
23. *Eleven thought of.*—Kathleen did not guess it, etc., etc.

I ought to state that the object thought of was marked on paper by one of the company, and handed round silently, so that all present might be aware of it.

I ought also to mention that the thought-reader was aware of the general character of things thought of; for instance, that it was definite objects in the first place, cards in the second, and so on.

Out of 260 experiments made with playing cards in different places by members of the committee specially appointed to examine into and report upon thought-transference, the first responses gave 1 quite right in 9 trials; whereas the proportion of correct answers, according to pure chance, would be 1 quite right in 52 alstri. For there are 52 cards in a pack.

Out of 79 trials made with numbers of two figures the first responses gave 1 quite right in 9 trials; whereas the proportion of correct answers according to pure chance would be one quite right in 90 trials. These proportions are not as great as those in the instances that have been cited above, the reason being that the power exhibited by the Misses Creery fell off considerably.

When geometric figures or pictures formed the subject of experiment, the percipient had to draw the figure or picture thought of. The manner in which these experiments were conducted was as follows:

"The percipient, Mr. Smith, is seated blindfolded at a table in our own room; a paper and pencil are within his reach, and a member of the committee is seated by his side. Another member of the committee leaves the room, and outside the closed door draws some figure at random. Mr. Blackburn (the agent), who, so far, has remained in the room with Mr. Smith, is now called out, and the door closed; the drawing is then held before him for a few seconds, till its impression is stamped on his mind. Then, closing his eyes, Mr

Blackburn is led back into the room and placed standing or sitting behind Mr. Smith at a distance of some two feet from him. A brief period of intense mental concentration on Mr. Blackburn's part now follows. Presently Mr. Smith takes up the pencil amidst the unbroken and absolute silence of all present, and attempts to reproduce upon paper the impression he has gained. He is allowed to do as he pleases as regards the bandage round his eyes; sometimes he pulls it down before he begins to draw; but if the figures be not distinctly present to his mind he prefers to let it remain on, and draws fragments of the picture as they are perceived. During all this time Mr. Blackburn's eyes are generally firmly closed (sometimes he requests us to bandage his eyes tightly as an aid to concentration), and, except when it is distinctly recorded, he has not touched Mr. Smith, and has not gone in front of him, or in any way within his possible field of vision, since he re-entered the room.

"When Mr. Smith has drawn what he can, the original drawing, which has so far remained outside the room, is brought in and compared with the reproduction. Both are marked by the committee and put away in a secure place."

A large number of the drawings thus produced—both in London and also in Liverpool with different agents and percipients—have been photographed and reproduced in the reports of the S.P.R. It is unfortunate that they cannot be reproduced here, as they constitute, perhaps, the most satisfactory of all the experiments performed. The drawings of the percipient are in most cases wonderfully like the original. In many cases, however, they were found to be inverted, or perverted. It seems to be a matter of accident whether the object is drawn by the percipient in its actual position. Horizontal objects are never described as vertical nor *vice versâ*. Slanting objects generally have the right amount of slant, but it may be in the opposite direction from that of the original. In many cases the objects drawn were such as could not easily be described in words, being quite irregular in character: sometimes they were grotesque, pictures of animals or human faces. They were never familiar objects. The grotesque and irregular ones were imitated fairly well, though, as is only natural, they were found to be more difficult than those which were more harmonious in character.

Another method was adopted in Liverpool for ascertaining what persons made good agents and percipients for the transference of figures. It will be found easier than the other by persons whose power of concentration is limited. The *modus operandi* is as follows:

"An improved method has been to place the drawing on a stand with a wooden back between the agent and 'subject' (*i.e.*, percipient), and the agent, placing himself at the opposite side of a small table, either joins hands with the subject' or, by preference, does not touch her at all, but gazes at the drawing until the 'subject' says she has an impression thereof. The drawing is then

taken down and concealed, the blindfolding is removed, and the 'subject, being aleady provided with drawing materials, proceeds to delineate the impression she has received."

It is impossible . to say how many drawings were correct, as the standard must be an arbitrary one. A great number were decided successes; a number of others reproduced part of the drawing; a number gave a general idea of it without being at all exact as reproductions; and there were naturally a good many failures.

(*b.*) *Colour.*—It is not more difficult to mentally transfer colour than form. In many experiments both are combined. It is, however, difficult to transfer more than two colours at a time, as also it is to think of more than two separate colours at once. The following examples of this were obtained at Liverpool from a series of experiments conducted by Mr. Guthrie. The experimenters were Mr. Guthrie, Mr. Birchall, Miss R., Miss R—d, Miss J., Miss E., and Miss C. In most of the experiments there was no contact.

| *Agent.* | *Percipient.* | *Object.* | *Result.* |
|---|---|---|---|
| Miss J. ... | Miss R. ... | A large spot of scarlet silk on black satin. | "A round red spot." |
| Do. ... | Do. ... | A triangle of blue silk on black satin. | "The colour is blue..... like a diamond ..... cut off." |
| All present. | Do. ... | A half-crown. | "Like a flat button—bright ..... no particular colour." |
| Do. ... | Do. ... | A small gold ear-drop. | "Round and bright ... yellow ..... with a loop to hang it by." |
| Do. ... | Do. ... | A red ivory chess knight. | "..... It is red.... broad at the bottom ... then very narrow ... then broad again at the top.... It is a chessman." |
| Do. ... | Do. ... | A diamond of pink silk on black satin. | "Light pink ... I cannot make out the shape." |
| Do. ... | Do. ... | A child's toy, brightly coloured, red, yellow, and blue, and moving up and down on a stick, by means of which the arms and legs were alternately drawn together and separated. | "I see red and yellow and it is darker at one end than the other. It is like a flag moving about.... Now it is opening and shutting like a pair of scissors." |

III. *The transference of sensation.*

(*a.*) *Physical—(e.g., Pain)*:—The first experiments were made by Mr. Blackburn and Mr. Smith (with contact) in the presence of Messrs. Myers and

Gurney, one of whom held a sofa cushion close before S.'s face, so that vision of anything the other side of it was impossible: and he was also blindfolded; the other pinched or otherwise hurt B., who sat opposite S., holding his outstretched hand. S. in each case localized the pain in his own person after it had been kept up pretty severely upon B.'s person for a time, varying from one to two minutes.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Part rendered painful ... ... | Left upper arm | ... Answer—Left upper arm. |
| Part rendered painful. | Lobe of right ear | ... Answer — Lobe of right ear. |
| Do. ... ... | Hair on top of head. | Answer—Hair on top of head. |
| Do. ... ... | Left knee ... ... | Answer—Left knee. |

A number of experiments were also made in Liverpool, of which the following are instances:

| | |
|---|---|
| Back of the neck pinched with scissors ... ... | "Dull pricks back of neck." |
| Tumbler of cold water held in hand ... ... ... | "Something in the right hand.....a sort of cold feeling." |
| Nostrils tickled ... ... | Could not say, but kept putting her hand to her nose as if feeling very uncomfortable. |
| Biting the end of the tongue ... ... ... | "It is in the lip or the tongue." |

It was found much more difficult to transmit an imaginary pain than a real one.

(ii). *Taste.*—Numerous experiments in taste-transference were performed. They were for the most part successful. Pepper, salt, mustard, cloves, pepper. mint, oil, vinegar, cheese, aniseed, camomile, quinine, nutmeg, and many other substances were tried. Very few experiments of this kind can be performed at a sitting, because of the difficulty the agent experiences in getting rid of one taste completely before another is begun, and if this is not done the experiments frequently fail.

(iii.) *Smell.*—Eau-de-cologne, lavender-water, camphor, carbolic-acid, smelling-salts, musk, etc., have been tried with a fair measure of success, but, as in the case of taste, not many can be tried at a sitting.

(*b.*) *Mental and moral feeling.*—Experiments cannot very well be made in the transference of emotions of joy, grief, etc. But it not unfrequently happens that when a person is in great danger or pain, some one at a distance, husband, wife, or friend, whom the person in danger or pain thinks about, experiences great depression or anxiety, and sometimes connects it with the

agent, if we may use the term in this case. We do not hear of joy being transferred, but there are many instances of grief. The following letter, which appeared with many others in one of the S.P.R. reports, is an instance of this phenomenon :—

"DEAR SIR,—The circumstance about which you inquire was as follows:—I left my house, ten miles from London, in the morning as usual, and in the course of the day was on my way from Victoria Street, Westminster, having reached Buckingham Palace, when, in attempting to cross the road, recently made muddy and slippery by a water-cart, I fell and was nearly run over by a carriage coming in the opposite direction. The fall and the fright shook me considerably, but beyond that I was uninjured. On reaching home, I found my wife waiting anxiously, and this is what she related to me:—She was occupied in wiping a cup in the kitchen, which she suddenly dropped, exclaiming, 'My God! he's hurt.' Mrs. S., who was near her, heard the cry, and both agreed as to the details of the time, and so forth. I have often asked my wife why she cried out, but she is unable to explain the state of her feelings beyond saying, 'I don't know why, I felt some great danger was near you.' These are simple facts, but other things more puzzling have happened in connection with the singular intuitions of my wife.

"Yours truly,

"T. W. S."

IV. *The transference of words, names, etc.*—In the case of words and names, given a fairly good agent and percipient, thought-transference is comparatively easy, though, as a rule, there are a fair number of only partial successes and not a few complete failures. The Misses Creery guessed a large proportion right without contact, of which one or two examples will suffice :—

"*Names of towns* :—

*Macclesfield.*—Jane did not guess rightly, then sat down and shortly afterwards guessed rightly.

*York.*—Maud guessed Ashford, then York.

*Paris.*—Miss Mary did not guess rightly.

*Chester.*—Jane guessed Manchester, then Chester.

*Fancy names* :—

*Peter Piper.*—Alice guessed at once.

*Blue Beard.*—Jane guessed at once.

*Tom Thumb.*—Jane guessed at once.

*Cinderella.*—Jane guessed at once.

*Sentences* :—(from experiments at Liverpool) written by Miss Crabbe, Gordon College.

"Next we tried reading sentences, written on the background (a large piece

of white cardboard), the rector of ————, being agent, and his daughter percipient. I wrote in a large hand, DON'T KILL DOGS, then THOU SHALT NOT KILL, both of which were read by Miss M. Then Mr.——, acting as percipient, and Miss ——— as agent, I wrote up, BE QUICK. Mr. ——— said 'Be q-u-i-e-t.' 'No,' said we, 'not quite right.' 'No,' said he, 'the last two letters are c-k, not e-t? It is Be quick,'. . . . . ."

A good example of involuntary thought-reading of a sentence by a child was reported in the *Spectator*:—

"I had one day been spending the morning in shopping, and returned by train just in time to sit down with my children to our early family dinner. My youngest child—a sensitive, quick-witted little maiden of two years and six weks old—was one of the circle. Dinner had just commenced, when I suddenly recollected an incident in my morning's experience, which I intended to tell her, and looked at the child with the intention of saying, 'Mother saw a big black dog in a shop, with curly hair,' catching her eyes in mine for an instant before speaking. Just then something called off my attention, *and the sentence was not uttered.* What was my amazement about two minutes afterwards to hear my little lady announce, "'Mother saw a big dog in a shop.' gasped. 'Yes, I did,' I answered; 'but how did you know?' 'With funny hair,' she answered, quite calmly, and ignoring my question. 'What colour was it, Evelyn?' asked one of her elder brothers 'was it black?' She said, 'Yes.' . . . . . .

"I had not remembered the circumstance until I fixed my eyes on my little daughter's. I had had no friend with me when I had seen the dog. . . . . ."

"I am, sir, etc., Caroline Barker, Fernedene, Sheffield."

*Concrete ideas, such as historical scenes, &c.*

(*From the Liverpool experiments conducted by Mr. Guthrie.*)

"For the next experiment an historical scene was proposed; it was agreed to think of 'Queen Elizabeth walking'—with an event to follow. The event intended by Mr. Guthrie was Queen Elizabeth surrounded by her courtiers walking to her barge. Coming to a muddy place she hesitates, and Walter Raleigh steps forward and spreads his cloak for her to tread upon. These details were not given by Mr. G. to the other thinkers. All that was done was to write the short sentences given above on a slip of paper, which Mr. G. held in his hand as he went round the company. It appeared, however, on inquiry afterwards that all surmised what was coming, and thought of the full scene. There were two trials. At the first trial, without contact, Miss R. said: 'The letter M; something moving backwards and forwards, like a lot of people walking.' (Mr. G., 'Distinguish one of them.') "Can't see one. . . . letter M like two archways.' In contact with Miss R——d, she said, 'a lot of small faces moving about. . . . can't distinguish any one in particular. . . . I see a lot of

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people. Oh! it is a picture. It is Queen Elizabeth walking from her palace to the barge, and Sir Walter Raleigh spreads his cloak for her to walk upon.'

"In another experiment it was agreed to think of a scene. Miss R. was requested to leave the room. In her absence it was decided to think of Cinderella, the Prince kneeling before her, trying on the glass slipper. On Miss R.'s return she was blindfolded, and isolated. Presently she appeared to be very much amused about something, and laughed, but could not be induced to tell what she saw. . . . Afterwards the experiment was renewed, Mr. B. kneeling down before one of the ladies to represent the scene. Miss R. again displayed much amusement, and finally asked, 'Is it Cinderella?' She was asked what she had seen, and replied, 'I saw a little girl in rags sweeping up the hearth, and the fairy god-mother looking in at the door.' Asked if this was what she saw before, said, 'Yes, but I did not know what it was.' Asked why she did not tell us what she saw, she said, 'I could not suppose you would think of any picture like that.' When told of the actual picture thought of, she said she had no idea of it. The picture she had described was very distinct;—she saw the little girl sweeping the hearth and the little wo an looking in at the door, but she did not know who they were."

*Tunes.*—Amongst other experiments performed at Liverpool, all present thought of a tune, one of them beating time with his hand, so that all could mentally sing it in time together. The percipient was brought in blindfolded, and in some cases succeeded in recognising well-known airs. She could not, however, succeed in naming more than one at a time, as she could not banish the first tune from her mind.

*Apparitions.*—A man may by a powerful act of will impress his own image upon the minds of persons at a distance, just as much as he can the image of any other material objects, such as a pair of spectacles or any other things, such as have been described in preceding experiments. It is necessary that the percipients should be in a very passive condition, as, for instance, in sleep. This power is often extremely strong about or shortly before the time of death. This is the true explanation of many of the cases of visions of dying persons and messages from them subjectively seen and heard by relatives or friends at a distance, it may be, of thousands of miles. In some cases, however, the double is actually projected. It is only a matter of degree between the two. No hard and fast line can be drawn between them. For in actual projection the first thing to do is to focus the mind on the point to which it is desired to project the astral, and then to imagine (or form a mental picture of) the double in that place.

In the following case, one at least of the percipients was asleep.

"One Sunday night last winter, at 1 a.m., I wished strongly to communicate the idea of my presence to two friends, who resided about three miles from

the house where I was staying. When I next saw them, a few days afterwards, I expressly refrained from mentioning my experiment; but in the course of conversation, one of them said 'You would not believe what a strange night we spent last Sunday'; and then recounted that both the friends had believed themselves to see my figure standing in their room. The experience was vivid enough to wake them completely, and they both looked at their watches, and found it to be one o'clock."

There was no pre-existing mesmeric *rapport* between the persons concerned. Similar impressions from persons in a dying state are so numerous that well-attested cases have come to the knowledge of most of our readers. So it is unnecessary to cite any such anecdotes here. Besides, they are outside the scope of this pamphlet, which is intended to direct persons who are desirous of performing experiments in thought-transference and psychometry. For it would, indeed, take an ardent experimenter to induce in himself the necessary moribund condition on the bare chance of impressing his image on the mind of some distant percipient.

V. *Abstract thoughts and ideas.*—It not unfrequently happens that when two persons are thinking out the same problem, the solution seems to come to both simultaneously, so that both begin to utter it at once. Or that if one is thinking on some philosophical subject, the other begins to discuss the same subject. However, this branch of thought transference does not very readily lend itself to experimentation.

It only remains for us to add that the officers of the Theosophical Society will be glad to receive records of experiments in Psychometry and Thought-transference. But, to be of use, those experiments must be complete, and include all failures as well as all successes or partial successes. Much evidence is still wanted, more especially in Psychometry, of which the scope and capacity of extension are virtually unlimited, before it can be established on a sound basis as a science. The more work is done in investigating it, the sooner will this result be attained.

# THEOSOPHY AND THE PRESENT AGE.

ACCORDING to the "Secret Doctrine," about 4990 years ago the cycle we are now in began, called, in Occultism, the Black Age (Kali Yuga). For us of the Aryan fifth sub-race of the Fifth Root Race, this cycle will endure thousands of years more. We are taught by the "Masters" that periods of light must be succeeded by periods of darkness; the former having passed away for this race, the latter now reigns. This cycle, as its name implies, is one of feeble spirituality, dominated on the contrary by gross materialism. In discussing, therefore, the effects of the strenuous efforts now being made to scatter broadcast the tenets of the old Wisdom Religion on the present age, these characteristics must be constantly borne in mind. The full reasons which induced the "Adepts" to select the commencement of the last quarter of this century as a proper time under Karmic law to openly advance Theosophy, is probably known to them alone. A very high authority in Occult matters has, however, mentioned two considerations which influenced the "Leaders of the World" in this matter. The Occult forces operating through some thousands of séance-rooms had led to the wide diffusion of very erroneous beliefs respecting human *post-mortem* states: scientific materialism was rapidly destroying all spirituality in the cultured classes of to-day. In 1875, therefore, the devoted servants of the great brotherhood founded by their order the Theosophical Society, and the publication of a portion of the esoteric wisdom commenced in "Isis Unveiled," and has lately culminated in the "Secret Doctrine." Putting forward as it does the synthesis of religion, philosophy, and science, claiming to be the base upon which all the esoteric creeds of to-day rest, and offering a solution of some of the darkest problems of life, the Old Wisdom Religion has received a varied reception from the people of this age. It is not surprising that it should excite a vast amount of enmity in some quarters, for, as an Occultist has lately said, "every truth is born into the world amidst yells of hatred." Other minds of wide and liberal tendencies have welcomed it with ardour, and worked hard and well to spread its tenets far and wide.

The great mass of sectarians, on the contrary, have viewed it with dislike or indifference, according to the strength of their attachment to the various religious ideas of this age. It is not, however, exceeding truth to assert, that of the numerous assailants of Theosophy, not one has properly understood its principles, whilst of the writings of some, it can be positively affirmed that they remain a lasting memorial of the depths of degradation to which the unchecked sway of prejudices and ignorance can drag the human mind.

The fundamental differences between the teachings and beliefs of so-called

Spiritualists and Theosophists are easily stated. The latter deny the agency of "spirits" in the production of the well-known phenomena of séance-rooms, contending, on the contrary, that these can be exhibited in open daylight, and by the exercise of natural powers, now latent in most men and developed only in a few at present. The Occultists have proved their case by exhibiting these abnormal powers, many times, and in many places, attested by a mass of evidence that nothing can shake. If the Occult explanation of "spiritualistic" phenomena is not accepted the latter will for ever remain inexplicable, a subject of jest for scoffers, and the despair of many believers, for the latter *know* that these incidents occur, but at the same time see the absurdity of attributing the utter nonsense often given forth by raps, etc., to the spirits of the dead.

The quarrel of Occultism with materialistic science begins at the very base. Everything is composed of indivisible atoms in constant motion, and Ether fills all interstellar space, says the latter. Matter, Force, and Ether, therefore, compose the Universe from the Materialist point of view, although science admits that it really knows nothing of the constitution of either. Occultists deny the essential truth of the atomic hypothesis; analyse, they say, the smallest conceivable atom, and you have a mathematical point only, with none of the attributes of matter, using the word in an ordinary sense. Potential space, then, in Occultism, is *entirely composed* of Lives, combined and differentiated in the One Life. The latter vibrates alike in the suns of space and the smallest grain of sand. There is nothing dead in the Universe, all that is, lives. Materialistic science will never be able to explain the now well-known phenomena of mesmerism, clairvoyance, etc., as it does not recognise any faculties in man, beyond the five senses and their exercise on the physical plane. On the other hand, Occultism asserts that there are several states of consciousness, each with its appropriate senses, in the human organism. Thus, it explains clairvoyance as the sixth, and coming sense, being now developed in a few persons only, but in the distant future to be common to all. The views of eminent scientists respecting he origin and history of the Universe and Man, are purely speculative and subject to constant changes. Alone and, unapproachable in its majestic sweep of conception is the stupendous system of physical, mental, and spiritual Evolution, embracing the Cosmos, given to this age in the "Secret Doctrine." Blind and molelike does physical science grope its way on this plane, constantly mistaking *effects* for *causes*, lost amidst the illusions of the senses. In spite, however, of the general materialism of scientific men, some of the most intuitional amongst them seem to be on the verge of reconciling their advanced views with the teachings of Occultism. A mass of evidence proving this assertion is given in the "Secret Doctrine." As time goes on, it will become more and more apparent that it is Theosophy alone that can bridge the present chasm between Religion and Science, showing them both to be but parts of the One Truth. Truth must be always One. The spectacle,

therefore, presented by this age of divorce betwixt Religion and Science, of bitter and ceaseless controversies between the leaders of the two schools, cannot be permanent. It is only the Old Wisdom Religion that can establish harmony and consolidate all branches of human knowledge; and in so far as it prevails in the future will darkness vanish and peace and light reign. It is only, perhaps, in the cycle to come that the great debt now due to the custodians of esoteric knowledge will be properly recognised. Until then a few only will welcome it, the majority continue to reject.

Before the "Adepts" drew from their vast stores of archaic lore and published considerable portions of human history, what did the foremost scholars of this age really know of the remote past? Very little of the early days of the Aryan race; beyond, nothing. Now, thanks to *those who know*, we have the main outlines of human history for the past 18,000,000 years. At last, we really know something of the submerged continents and lost giant races of old. The civilized builders of the walls of Tyrius; of the Cyclopian ruins scattered throughout Asia, Europe, and America; the architects of the huge statues of Bamian, and Easter Island. The rash attempts formerly made by so-called scholars to compress the history of the world into some 6,000 years have now almost ceased; and the general public will soon be able to hear, without any severe shock to their religious ideas, that the great continent of Atlantis sank beneath the waves over 4,000,000 years ago, and Lemuria suffered the same fate millenniums before. The advance of the cycle of knowledge is slow, but sure.

In nothing does the conceit of some Occidental minds show itself more prominently than in the denial of the very existence of "the Masters of Wisdom" by those who, for the sake of their own credit as men of capacity and intelligence, might well pause before coming to such a decision. For in so doing they deliberately reject a mass of reliable evidence which would suffice, apart from prejudice, to prove the matter to the satisfaction of any reasonable inquirer. Want of space now prevents the collection and marshalling of all these easily available proofs. It may be affirmed, however, that no believer in the doctrine of the constant evolution and progression of the human race can consistently deny the probability of the present existence of these Elder Brethren; those, in fact, who are the outcome of ages of struggles and conquests over the Lower Self in human nature, and whom the not remote future will see looked up to by ordinary men, as ideals of all that is good and true.

F. T. S.

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# A GENERAL VIEW OF THEOSOPHY.

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## A PRIVILEGED LETTER.

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# THEOSOPHY AND ORTHODOXY.

By WILLIAM KINGSLAND, F.T.S.

PART I.

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# A GENERAL VIEW OF THEOSOPHY.

Now that the Theosophical movement is becoming more widely known, there seems to be danger lest misconception should arise concerning it. Many people talk vaguely of Theosophy, with only the faintest, most meagre idea of what Theosophy really is, of its motives and designs.

It is a fact that cannot be disputed that, at the present time, there is a growing revolt against what has been well named "Churchianity." The priests have lost their power, their words are but idly listened to, and are practically disregarded. Christianity is acknowledged to be beautiful in theory, but utterly impossible in practice. And yet humanity must have religion—that binding force cannot be dispensed with.

If it be granted that the various forms of religion at present extant fail to satisfy this pressing need, the question that presents itself is, Where shall we look for a substitute? Christianity, both Catholic and Anglican, has had its day. The dreary creed of the Positivists will never satisfy struggling humanity. Those among us whose path is strewn with roses, may be content to think that with death there comes annihilation, may feel no desire for justice and compensation hereafter; but the suffering, the sorrowful, cry out against the cruel hopelessness of such teachings.

It is the part of religion to comfort and soothe, to elevate and ennoble, and when we are forced sadly to own that no extant form of religion is able to satisfy us, where shall we look for help? I reply, To Theosophy. And if asked why, I say, Because it is wide, deep, grand, and all-embracing; "it is not a religion but religion itself"—the soul and pith of all religions.

There is in Theosophy no formalism, no narrowness, all its conceptions are wide and lofty, and, therefore, satisfying. Unlike Christianity it does not depend on written testimony; Theosophy is philosophical in its nature. And Theosophists believe and assert that "There is no religion higher than Truth."

We do not say, with the Christians: "Believe as we do, or you will be damned." We ask you to join us in the search for Truth, which is higher, far higher than empty faith. Faith is a word often on the lips of a Christian; but if we look into this so-called faith, what do we find?—in nine cases out of ten nothing but credulity. To the man of stagnant mind belief is easy. And to all

of us, of course, it is more comfortable to believe what we are told, than it is to search for what is true.

There is an Italian proverb which says: "We believe what we *can*, not what we *will*." This is profoundly true; many of us would willingly believe, and honestly endeavour to do so; but doubts and misgivings crowd upon our minds, and we find ourselves submerged in Agnosticism against our will.

Theosophy steps forward and says: "Do not look outside for help, look into yourselves, culivate your inner vision, increase your Intuition." Some may ask: What is this Intuition? I should call it the voice of God speaking to, and encouraging the human entity. There is in each one of us a spark of the Divine, though in many of us, alas! it is obscured and clouded, existing only as a latent potentiality. It is not a comforting and exalting thought—that each entity is spiritually a part of God, thrown off from the Infinite—placed here for progress, to increase the spirituality by discipline, and, finally, after successive re-incarnations, to return to the Infinite whence it came.

Let this divine spark, this hidden gem, shine about our path with a steady light, driving before it the phantoms of error, superstition, and bigotry. True knowledge can only be obtained through intuition, and those who earnestly cultivate this vision of the soul will find truth, and help, and guidance, in the battle of life.

St. George Mivart says of intuitive perception: "The greatest certainty to which the human intellect can attain is the certainty of intuition—the certainty of things which require no proof, because they are self-evident. Such intuitional certainty is that of our existence and present feelings, thoughts and volitions; the certainty of things directly perceived by several of our senses at once, and, above all, the certainty of universal and necessary truths, such as that things which are equal to the same thing are equal to each other, and that nothing can simultaneously both be and not be."

The whole scheme of Theosophy is, as I have said before, so large and grand, that those who go deeply into it, who really follow it, cannot but realize that their own individual troubles are small and insignificant. For example, if, when trouble encompasses me, I turn from my sorrow, and contemplate the far greater misery of many around me, and further than that, of numbers whom I know not of, how can I selfishly dwell and brood upon my trials. Rather should the knowledge that there are but a few infinitesimal drops in the great sea of human misery, make me resolve to endure bravely, and help others to endure.

The true Theosophist throws off sorrow, he refuses to dwell in an atmosphere of depression. He does not allow his mind to be engrossed by ephemeral cares. He has glorious hopes for the future of his race: how can he then suffer himself to be cast down by petty personal cares in the present?

Frequently has the thought occurred to me when unhappy: What does it signify if this little ego of mine suffers? many whom I know are happy; the

happiness is not mine, it is true, but it is there, the happiness truly exists, though not for me. "Progress, not happiness, is the law of this world" —and Theosophy holds out a helping hand to all who wish for progress. Theosophy appeals to the dissatisfied, to those who feel that their religion, with its forms and ceremonies, is not enough; it appeals to the active-minded, to those who long for knowledge for its own sake; it appeals to the solitary, to these it offers a spiritual Brotherhood, whose members counsel, and advise, and support each other. The members of this fraternity are of all classes, all creeds, all nationalities: the bigoted and the exclusive find no place in it. To quote the words of Colonel Olcott: "Truth, not Superstition, is the aim of Theosophy."

Those whose physical relationships are unfortunate, will do well to form to themselves a spiritual tie of kinship; for, to those who subject the material to the spiritual, the affinity of kindred minds is far more binding than the mere physical relationship formed by the accident of birth.

It should be our aim to live more universally than individually; this one little life in which I, as a unit, live, is far too small for me. Our sympahies should be limitless, unbounded, far-reaching. For the more we widen our true selves, the more we partake of the nature of the Great Source whence we came.

To conclude, Theosophy is not a rival to Christianity, or to any other of the numerous forms of religion. As stated in the "Secret Doctrine," "Esoteric philosophy reconciles all religions, strips everyone of its outward human garments, and shows the root of each to be identical with that of every other great religion. It proves the necessity of an absolute divine principle in nature. It denies Deity no more than it does the sun. Esoteric philosophy has never rejected God in Nature, nor Deity as the absolute and abstract *ens*. It only refuses to accept any of the gods of the so-called monotheistic religions —gods created by man in his own image and likeness."

A. C. W.

# A PRIVILEGED LETTER.

My Dear— —,—Do you remember borrowing from me, earlier in the year, Mrs. Sinnett's "Purpose of Theosophy," and saying how very much you liked all that you could understand of it, but that you wished I had some book that would make it all plain, as you had no time to study?

I have often thought of your wish, and will now try to state as clearly, and in as few words as possible, the "Truth that can make you free."

You told me that what the Church teaches about being "saved," and about a God who rewards and punishes just as he likes, and is all the while on the watch to catch you tripping, or else has mercy and forgives you all your sins when you know you don't deserve it—that all this does not satisfy you; and that the world seems full of injustice, and wrong, and misery—and sometimes you feel as if you could not bear it! Then, again, you told me you had heard a good deal about spiritualism, and how it seems to make some people very happy to fancy the spirits of those who are dead are dancing round all the time—knocking, and rapping, and writing on slates. And I remember how vigorously you said—"If there *is* another life beyond the grave, I hope I shall have something better to do than that!"

There *is* indeed something better and greater than all this. For God is not to be limited by man's ideas, or by anything else. He is everything, and He is in every atom of space. You are a part of Him, and so am I—so is every being on this earth, and in all the other worlds.

And if you ask me, "How can this be, when the world is full of evil—how can all *this be God?*" I answer thus—

This is hard to understand, because men have drifted into the habit, for so many hundreds of years, of thinking and living as if this earth-life were the only *real* life, and this body of flesh the only real body. The truth is just the reverse of this. You—the real *you*—the Ego—are a part of the Great Eternal—a ray of the Divine Sun. You have always lived, and always will live, and up to the present you have kept on being reincarnated, *i.e.*, born again and again in different bodies, with long "rests," as it were, between these earth lives—just as you have waked up, done a long day's work, gone to sleep, and passed the night in "dreamland," and so on, through all the years of this earth-life.

I do not think you need fancy it strange that you do not remember all this. You cannot even remember the beginning of this life. You cannot remember being born, though you were alive then. And you cannot remember half your dreams, or, mercifully, half your troubles. If memory were too strong, we should lose reason. Just fancy what our earth-lives would be if we went

on merely remembering the bodily pain of each illness, or wound, or accident; and all the mental pain of losing dear friends, or, still worse, of being disappointed in them; of failures, and sins, and remorse! We should soon be quite mad! Though people cherish their griefs and pains, and make the most of them, you cannot deny that time and partial forgetfulness soften them, and that though all may seem changed, the same self goes on living through it all.

Look back at this one life of yours, of which you told me some of the changes!—not one of the friends or relations of your earlier days is near you. You are living in quite a different place, and doing totally different work from that to which you were brought up. All is changed, yet *you* still live on. But these changes do not come to you by *chance*, nor by special "providence," as it is called. Everything that happens to you, good or bad, pleasant or unpleasant, is the direct consequence of what you yourself have done before, either when younger in this life or another time you were in earth-body. It does not seem fair, when you first think of it, that we should suffer now for what we cannot *remember* doing last time. But you see it is not such a small personal matter as we have been accustomed to think it. It is a grand, unalterable, eternal law (called in Sanscrit "Karma") of cause and effect; and everything we do or say, or think even, sets going a train of effects of which we cannot see the end, which may even make a difference in other worlds. Therefore, whatever happens *must* be perfectly just, and you have nobody to thank for it or to blame for it but yourself! "As a man soweth, so shall he also reap." If people realized this, they would begin to be very careful in all their thoughts, words, and actions. It is not only "curses" that "come home to roost," but unkind words and thoughts (for thought is more powerful than action)—and when we *seem* to suffer innocently through the faults and weaknesses of others we are only getting what we have justly earned ourselves. And this is why some are born to wealth and health, and all good things—and some to poverty, and misery, and sin.

The *good* of it all is this:

That though with our memories we cannot go back through all this interweaving of cause and effect, the real self, the higher self or Ego, *does* know and understand it all, and profits by all the experience, and speaks to our lower self about it in the voice of *conscience*—intuition.

Therefore it is that you know quite well whether anything is right or wrong, without any need of a clergyman to tell you, for the highest of all teachers is within you, that Higher Self which is the Ray of the Divine Sun, however feebly it may show itself at first when you look for it, because of the heavy curtain of earthly feelings and desires that covers it.

This is what Jesus meant when he said: "Let your Light so shine before men, that they may see your good works"—not that they may praise *you* for them, but that they may see and understand that the good works follow

naturally when the Light is shining clear within, and so may recognise what that Light is and whence it comes.

And *then* they will understand also that this Light is the only *real* thing there is in all the world. Evil is no reality. Misery, and pain, and sin, terrible and hard to bear as they are, are only the result of ignorance—the ignorance of all, those who have not awoke to the knowledge of their Higher Self, or grasped the truth that they, too, are immortal Rays of the Eternal Light, which is Love.

And until this great lesson is learned they *must* suffer, in the body, and through the body. But when the body itself has passed away, and all the sorrow and pain are hushed, still the real *you*, dear friend, will be there—the "Ego" which cannot die. Death hath not touched It at all, dead though the house of it seem.

Does this seem to you awful, or lonely?

The glorious sunshine streams forth and gladdens the whole earth—is each little ray as it pierces the morning mists *separate* and lonely?

When a man begins to perceive his Higher Self, he realizes at the same instant that *every other human being* (whether he knows it or not) has also a Higher Self like his own—as near to him as the little ray of Sunshine is to all the rest of the rays that make up the Light—with a body for it to dwell in and reap experience—which must be kept pure and holy as a "Temple of the Holy Ghost," as St. Paul calls it.

Therefore, instead of being *lonely*, when a man feels the Universal Brotherhood of all human beings, whether rich or poor, black or white, good, bad, happy, or miserable, a great desire comes over him to try and make every brother and sister realize it also; so that instead of passing their earth lives in misery, trouble, and sin, they too may, through the wisdom of the Higher Self, "shine more and more unto the perfect day."

And if they are many of them too fast asleep in earth-bound ignorance to awaken yet to the Light of Truth, we can begin at least by helping to purify and cleanse the Temple of the Body ready for the awakening of the higher consciousness, and begin that awakening by our love and sympathy towards them. Just because they are our brothers and sisters, nothing ought to seem too much trouble for us to take for them. These common sayings: "Charity begins at home," "You must think of yourself and not do too much," "You must not rob yourself," are all a mistake—illusion. You must *forget* yourself entirely, and serve the brother or sister who needs you to the utmost extent of your power in small things as well as in great, thus proving to him—better than by any amount of *preaching*—that Love is the Law of the Universe, and the Fountain of all Light.

Yours in loving sympathy,

"HOPE."

# THEOSOPHY AND ORTHODOXY.

By WILLIAM KINGSLAND, F.T.S.

## PART I.

ORTHODOXY has two meanings. Etymologically, it means "right doctrine," and in a secondary sense "the genuine doctrines of Scripture." Conventionally, it means that which is currently received or accepted as being true, among a certain portion of mankind, or at a certain period of history. That which is orthodox in one Church or sect is often spoken of as being heterodox in another. In speaking of orthodoxy, this latter is the meaning usually given to the term, and in this sense we find that Theosophy is in direct antagonism with orthodoxy. They are as wide apart as the poles.

Looking at Humanity as a great whole, we find that it is ever on the march. Some call this movement the progress of civilization—others call it evolution. All, however, are agreed that Humanity is moving towards some great end, some consummation of that hope which animates each individual. This hope expresses itself in many ways, but principally it takes the form of what is ordinarily known as religion.

If Humanity were moving forward as one great whole, united by a perfect organization, and a well-defined purpose, it might be possible that such a thing could exist as a universal religion. But such is not the case. It is a familiar saying that one half of the world does not know what the other half is doing. Men are separated from each other by great barriers, partly natural, partly artificial. Differences of race and nationality mark off men into broad and very distinct divisions, among which there is little commmunity of interests, save what is brought about by the necessities of commerce. Within these divisions, again, men are split up into smaller sections and sub-sections, each with some interest for the most part opposed to the interests of the others, while finally, we have the individual unit, who is more or less at war with all his fellows, seeing that it is with them he has to struggle for his very existence, and that they will give him scant pity should he fail in the battle of life. Thus the principle of competition reigns supreme; the fittest (God save the mark!) survive, while the weakest go to the wall.

Thus we see that if Humanity as a whole be moving towards one common destiny, it is rather in spite of itself than by reason of any unity of purpose or well-defined and recognizable goal. Nay, the moment we begin to deal with this subject, and to ask seriously what is the goal of Humanity? we come

face to face with a thousand various solutions of the problem, we come at once into contact with that great controversy which is ever raging round the hopes, fears, and superstitions of poor human nature. Every kind of orthodoxy offers a solution of the problem, but we cannot take one on its own recommendation any more than another.

Theosophy, however, occupies a peculiar position in reference to this controversy. The man who has rightly understood the principles of Theosophy, steps at once into a region where he is unaffected by the strife of religions, creeds, and dogmas. He no longer looks to find *the* truth in any one religion, for he has got at the root of all religions. He no longer looks at Humanity through the coloured glasses of his own orthodoxy. He has become cosmopolitan in the truest and widest meaning of the term. He looks at Humanity as a whole, and will accept no principle which is not wide enough to cover all the phenomena of human nature in all places and all ages.

Every religion fails at just this point, that is individual and exclusive, instead of being universal. Each one covers only a very small portion of the experiences of Humanity. Not only is this the case, but each religion is constantly undergoing a process of modification and change. Orthodoxy represents the dominant religious opinions at any particular time, but that which is orthodox to-day may have been heterodox yesterday, and that which is heterodox to-day is very likely to become orthodox to-morrow. We see, then, that those who accept orthodox dogmas as final statements of truth, lie under a double veil of illusion, for how can that be *truth* which is constantly subject to change? Truth is eternal, unchangeable, from everlasting to everlasting; but that which changes is phenomena, not noumena.

The Theosophist recognises and applies this principle to its fullest extent. To him the whole manifested universe is *maya* (Illusion). It is not on this plane that we can stand face to face with truth, for all that we see with our eye, and hear with our ear, is subject to change, decay, death.

> "The cloud-capped towers, the gorgeous palaces,
> The solemn temples, the great globe itself,
> Yea, all which it inherit, shall dissolve;
> And, like this insubstantial pageant faded,
> Leave not a rack behind."

The secret lies in distinguishing between relative and absolute truth, between the *form* and that of which the form is an expression, between the temporal and the eternal.

The Theosophist, equally with the religionist, must formulate his ideas, but the difference between the two is this, that the Theosophist is not bound to any form as a *dogma*, but recognises in the form merely the creation of a passing phase of his own consciousness. Thus all forms of thought are necessary to Humanity as a whole, just as all forms of plant or animal life go

to make up the great life of nature. The religions of one age or of one race have no more claim to be a specially favoured part of that great unity which is Humanity in all its phases, than has the flora or fauna of one epoch or one climate to consider itself a specially favoured part of that great unity which we call nature. Each is but the manifestation under different conditions of one and the same thing.

What, then, shall we say of orthodoxy, of that which is constantly subject to change, yet would pose for the time being as eternal truth. We hear much of the conflict between Science and Religion, and are sometimes reminded that there can be no conflict between *true* science and *true* religion. Granted; but if objection is taken to the phrase, let us say "the conflict between science and orthodoxy." Did not this same orthodoxy once teach that the earth was flat; aye, and put men to death for believing otherwise? Is it science that has had to yield in the conflict or is it orthodoxy? In the great march of human progress, then, call it by what name you will, we find orthodoxy ever in the rear, calling vainly to men to stand still, doing all in its power to stay the march, clinging to dead formulas and empty rituals. The spirit of orthodoxy is ever the same—narrow, intolerant, self-righteous. Truly it would appear the least desirable thing in all the world to confess oneself—orthodox.

If we use the word in its etymological sense, it is clear that there can only be one "right doctrine," one truth concerning the Scriptures, but just as clearly that which is commonly called orthodoxy cannot be that truth, for this orthodoxy is ever being changed and modified. In spite of itself, orthodoxy is obliged to follow the great march of Humanity, and is continually taking up fresh ground, which has been cleared by the great reformers of the world. Orthodoxy has at all times persecuted and put to death the noblest benefactors of the race. The history of all reformations, and the fate of the leaders thereof, is one which is ever being repeated.

It would appear to be somewhat a matter of difficulty to say exactly what is orthodox at the present day. The change in religious thought during the present century has been very remarkable and rapid. There would appear to be at least two orthodoxys—the old orthodoxy, now rapidly dying out, and a new orthodoxy, hardly as yet defined, but trying to take its stand on ground which has been cleared for it by science.

But meanwhile Theosophy is disclosing new ground, which is far in advance of anything that has yet been deemed within the reach of human knowledge. Orthodox science as well as orthodox religion refuses to give ear to the new teachings. For it is unfortunately the case that there is an orthodoxy in science as well as in religion. Orthodox science to-day is materialistic and agnostic; how, then, can it accept phenomena which are apparently "supernatural," that is to say, not explainable under any of the *known* laws of nature?

Yet nothing is more remarkable at the present time than the prevalence of belief in so-called *supernatural* phenomena. Spiritualism, mesmerism, clairvoyance, and occult phenomena in general, claim attention on every hand. Many of the phenomena indeed, are now beyond question, and have been proved by science itself, but the explanation of them is quite another matter. Orthodox religion seeks one way out of the difficulty, orthodox science has quite another theory.

Meanwhile, Theosophy as a pioneer of the new movement has to contend with orthodoxy in every shape and form, and although to the Theosophist it is of little moment what orthodoxy is teaching, it may be useful to pass in review some recent statements on behalf of orthodox religion.

We have before us two books, each professing to be written for the purpose of upholding orthodox Christianity. Each is a remarkable book in its way. The first, entitled, "Earth's Earliest Ages,"* is remarkable as a deliberate attempt to revive the old Calvinistic theology, and the ignorant and superstitious orthodoxy of the Middle Ages. It represents the old orthodoxy, which has nothing whatever in common with the spirit of the age.

Of quite a different nature is the second book, entitled "Natural Law in the Spiriual World."† The writer of this book, boldly seizes on those ideas respecting the universal operation of natural laws which it has been the province of science to demonstrate, and instead of treating them, as has hitherto been done by Christian apologists, as opposed or isolated from revelation and Christian doctrine, he hails the enlightenment of the age and the fundamental concepts of science as allies to Christianity, and endeavours to plant Christian doctrine on a scientific basis. The premises on which the author bases his argument are thoroughly scientific, and, we may add, Theosophical. So much is this the case, that we often feel puzzled to understand how it is that the author does not state his conclusions in terms of Theosophy, instead of in terms of orthodoxy.

We shall deal with this, however, later on, and in the meanwhile we must glance at some of the statements and doctrines put forward in "Earth's Earliest Ages," which deals very specifically with Spiritualism, Theosophy, and Buddhism.

On closing the book, one verily wakes up as from a dream—a dream of the dark, mediæval ages of demonology and witchcraft, when men truly believed that the earth was the centre of the universe, and that all science and literature —save that which the Holy Church had sanctioned—was the work of the Devil and all his angels. Indeed the book is a deliberate attempt to revive this notion. Everything that is opposed to the orthodox interpretation of the Bible

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* "Earth's Earliest Ages," by G. H. Pember, M.A. 1887.

† "Natural Law in the Spiritual World," by Henry Drummond, F.R.S.E., F.G.S., 1887.

which the author has constructed, is deliberately and with great care traced to Satan and Antichrist. We awake from the dream and rub our eyes, and ask ourselves can we really have been reading a serious book, are we positively to take the author at his word?

We turn back the pages, and light upon this passage:—"There is, however, "in the account of this day's work (the second day of creation) an omission "which is probably significant, for the usual conclusion, 'and God saw that "it was good,' is in this case left out. And since the reasons ordinarily given "for the omission are unsatisfactory, we venture to suggest the following "explanation. May not the withholding of God's approval be a hint of the "immediate occupation of the firmament by demons, those, indeed, which are "its present inhabitants? Since they were concerned in the fall of man, they "must have speedily appeared in the newly-formed atmosphere. May they "not, therefore, have been imprisoned in the deep, and having found some "way of escape at the lifting up of the waters, have swarmed into the "dominion of the air, of which their leader is Prince? In this case, the firma-"ment might have been teeming with them before the close of the second day, "and we need not wonder that God refused to pronounce their kingdom good."

Here is another equally good extract:—

"While Eve was standing near the tree a serpent approached and "addressed her. The fact that she was not startled by such an occurrence "seems to point to the existence of an intelligent communication between man "and the inferior creatures before the fall. But we must not, of course, think "of the serpent as the repulsive and venomous reptile to which we now feel "an instinctive antipathy. For it had not then been cursed, but held itself "upright, the most intelligent and, probably, the most beautiful of all the beasts 'of the field."

Do not smile, gentle reader; we are not quoting from a comic weekly, but from a serious book on a serious subject. The author is very much in earnest, and evidently believes all this, and much more; a rapid sketch of which we now propose to give.

We do not think it worth while to controvert the author point by point. He relies mainly upon the verbal inspiration and literal interpretation of the Bible. He lays it down as his first principle "that the 1st chapter of Genesis, "equally with those which follow it, is, in its primary meaning, neither vision "nor allegory, but plain history, and must, therefore, be accepted as a literal "statement of facts."

If we accept this principle, what follows will be merely a matter of translation and interpretation, for he does not affirm that the English version is literally true, but only the Greek and Hebrew MSS., and he is constantly retranslating for the benefit of his own theories. It would not be difficult to controvert most of his renderings, and the conclusions he draws therefrom, by

quotations from authorities and scholars who have as much or more right to be heard in the matter than he has. Anticipating this statement, however, he has guarded against it in the following manner:—" Are the Scriptures really so " inconsistent, or so vague, that a multitude of conflicting opinions and " doctrines can be fairly deduced from them? Were they so, the fact would " indeed, be a strong argument against their Divine origin. But we are by no " means forced upon such an admission; nay, as soon as we begin to consider " the enigma, an obvious and certain solution presents itself. For not the " revelation of God, but the expounders of that revelation, are responsible for " the diversities of Christendom, the fault rests with the fallen and corrupt " nature of man, which so affects him that he cannot clearly discern truth even " when it is set before his eyes."

This is begging the whole question in a truly astonishing manner, and leads us to ask what claim the author can make to be above that " fallen and corrupt nature," and why we should accept him as an expounder of revelation in preference to those whose views by no means coincide with his own?

It is useless, however, to enter into controversy when we are at issue on fundamental principles. Those who accept the author's principles must agree among themselves as to the value of authority in general and the author's in particular. In the meanwhile, not Theosophy merely, but all the best thought of the age, and even, if we are not mistaken, what may almost be described as the new orthodoxy, has rejected the doctrine of the verbal inspiration and literal interpretation of the Bible.

The author says elsewhere:—" We surely need not accuse the Bible of " vagueness or inconsistency in order to explain the diversities of its interpre- " tation. For if we be observant and honest, we must often ourselves feel the " difficulty of approaching the sacred writings without bias, seeing that we " bring with us a number of stereotyped ideas, which we have received as " absolutely certain, and never think of testing, but only seek to confirm." How far he has himself been able to approach without bias, or how far he is writing merely in support of a " stereotyped idea " we shall leave it to our readers to judge; in the first place, from the declared objects of the book, and in the second place from the matter which is put forward in order to support these objects.

The book has been written, according to the author's own confession, with a two-fold object: (*a.*) to uphold the " Biblical Cosmogony," and the " plan of salvation"; and (*b.*) " to show that the characteristic features of the days of Noah are reappearing in Christendom, and, therefore, that the days of the Son of Man are not far distant."

We may notice in the first place the ingenious theory advanced in order to get over the geological difficulties with regard to the Biblical account of the creation.

The author supposes that there were two creations, the first of which is briefly referred to in the 1st verse of the 1st chapter of Genesis, while the second is the six days' creation, the account of which begins with the second verse. The first creation he supposes to have taken place ages ago, and to have given us all those geological strata and fossil remains which have hitherto been the great stumbling-block with regard to Biblical chronology. This first creation, however, was afterwards destroyed by God because of the wickedness of its inhabitants; it was reduced to ruins, and left in this state for an indefinite period of time. After this came the six days' creation, of which we have a more detailed account, and which took place some 6,000 years ago. We must quote, however, in order to show what the theory is, and to what lengths the author goes in order to support it.

He says:—"It is clear that the second verse of Genesis describes the earth "as a ruin; but there is no limit of the time which elapsed between creation "and this ruin. Age after age may have rolled away, and it was probably "during their course that the strata of the earth's crust were gradually "developed. There is room for any length of time between the first and "second verses of the Bible. . . . . Wherefore had God thus destroyed "the work of His hands? If we may draw any inference from the history of "our own race, sin must have been the cause of this hideous ruin. . . . . "For, as the fossil remains clearly show, not only were disease and death— "inseparable companions of sin—then prevalent among the living creatures of "the earth, but even ferocity and slaughter. And the fact proves that these "remains have nothing to do with our world; since the Bible declares that all "things made by God during the six days were very good, and that no evil was "in them till Adam sinned. . . . . The absence in the fossiliferous strata of "any vestige of pre-Adamite man is no real obstacle to the view we have taken. "For we are totally unacquainted with the conditions of life in that pristine "world, which may not have been, and, indeed, probably were not, the same "as in our own. For Adam was created after, and apparently in full view of "a previous failure. Hence it may be that death did not touch those primeval "men until the final destruction. . . . . It may be that their bodies were "resolved into primal elements, leaving the spirit naked, instead of the spirit "departing and giving up the body to decay as with us. . . . . It may be "that they all perished in what is now to us the deep, and that their remains "are covered by the deposit at the bottom of the ocean. . . . . Indeed, we "find hints which perhaps add some little confirmation to this last conjecture, "and tend to link these disembodied spirits with the locality which may have "been the scene of their sins in the flesh. At least, there is a prison mentioned "in Scripture, which is either in the depths of the sea, or is connected with "them and in which we may with probability infer that many demons are "already confined, while fresh captives are from time to time placed under the

" same restraint. . . . . Certainly the knowledge of some such fact seems " to have terrified the legion of spirits from which our Lord delivered the " Gadarene; or, otherwise, what meaning can we assign to their agonizing " entreaty that He would not command them to depart into the abyss?"

We leave it to our readers to digest as best they may this nauseating mass of conjecture.

After this follows a detailed commentary on the first chapters of Genesis, from which we may give a few extracts to show to what lengths the author goes in building upon the foundation of a " literal statement of facts." We have already given an extract concerning Eve and the serpent; here is the rest of the paragraph :—" It is an interesting fact that in that remarkable sculpture, " the oldest surviving representation of the fall—which is found in the temple " of Osiris at Phylæ, Eve is seen offering the fruit to Adam, the tree is between " them, and the serpent stands by in an erect posture. Perhaps it sustained " itself by wings; and, indeed, the epithet 'flying' is applied to the *saraph*, " or flying species, in a passage of Isaiah. The creature was, then, free from " venom, and not improbably winged, while its scales glittered in the sun like " burnished gold."

Our readers must refer to the " Secret Doctrine " for the esoteric and symbological meaning of the serpent.

There are about nine pages in which the author thus works up the situation, which culminates in the final triumph of the tempter. In these nine pages we note that the word " probably," or its equivalents, " perhaps," " it may be," are used eleven times; indeed, from page 19 to page 239, where the commentary on the Biblical account ends, these words occur on almost every page, almost, in fact, in every paragraph. Such an amount of conjecture is worthy to be wedded to those " historical facts " which belong to the period of our childhood.

Here is the author's idea as to the origin of sacrifice :—" Now, sacrifice as " an expiation must have been ordained by God himself. Man could never " have thought of such a thing, or have dared, in his worship, to take the " life of one of God's creatures, unless he had been commanded to do so. " Probably, then, it was at this most appropriate time that the Lord instituted " the rite as a type of the great sacrifice to come. He slew the victims, and as " he shed their life-blood, Adam and Eve for the first time gazed upon death " with affrighted eyes. He then showed them how to lay the carcases upon " the altar, that they might be an offering made by fire unto the Lord. " Finally, He took the skins of the slain beasts, and made of them the coats " with which He clothed the trembling pair."

Comment would be superfluous, but might we not quote the words of St. Paul :—" When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I hought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things."

We must now glance at those chapters which deal specifically with Spiritualism, Theosophy, and Buddhism. It will at once strike a reader of the book that the author proves too much in reference to these. In his anxiety to prove that these three movements are in reality but a combined attack on the part of the Devil and his angels, he states the case for each one of them with such clearness that Spiritualists, Theosophists, and Buddhists alike cannot but feel gratified at the testimony which he gives as to the rapid spread of their teachings, and the way in which they are influencing the thought of the age, and breaking down the old and mouldering edifice of ecclesiastical Christianity.

He says:—"Should any of our readers be predisposed in favour of such a "theory (spiritual evolution), we would entreat them to consider its pedigree as "given in our chapter on Theosophy; and to note its avowed origin from "'descending angels,' who can be none other than those Nephilim which the "Bible mentions as having already appeared twice upon earth; and to remember "that its acknowledged depositories and guardians have been, not the apostles "and church of the Lord Jesus, but the Initiates of the mysteries, the Brahman "priests, and the followers of Buddha."

To this we may remark that both Moses and Paul, not to mention other Biblical writers, were—Initiates of the Mysteries. If our readers doubt it, let them study the "Secret Doctrine," for the proof lies in the finding of the key which connects the various exoteric religions of the world with the one "Wisdom Religion," taught only in the inner schools. We are told by St. Jerome, who translated the Hebrew Gospel of Matthew into Greek, that it contained matter which was not intended to be disclosed by the evangelist, and which was therefore omitted by him. St. Paul continually speaks of the *mystery* of Christ, and in 1st Corinthians ii., 2, he says plainly that he "came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, proclaiming to you the mystery of God," and in the 1st verse of the third chapter: "And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, as unto babes in Christ." Then, in the 6th verse of the second chapter, he says:—"Howbeit we speak wisdom among the perfect (full-grown or initiated) yet a wisdom not of this world, nor of the rulers of this world, which are coming to nought; but we speak God's wisdom in a mystery, even the wisdom that hath been hidden, which God foreordained before the worlds unto our glory." The rest of the chapter is a statement of the spiritual nature of this wisdom. It is only those, however, who have the key who will understand what Paul is alluding to. In the 15th verse, he says:—"He that is spiritual judgeth all things, and He Himself is judged of no man." Also (Col. ii., 16) "Let no man judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of a feast day, or a new moon, or a Sabbath day: which are a shadow of the things to come, but the body is Christ's." Let those who are still judged in these matters consider whether they are not as yet "held in bondage under the rudiments of the world."

Thanks to a few at the present day, the veil of the mystery has been partially lifted, and everywhere men eager for spiritual truth and enlightenment are grasping the opportunity. We may quote again from the book in evidence of this:—"If we investigate early Paganism by the light of recent discoveries, "we soon perceive that its chief strength lay in its intellectual attractions, and "that many of its priests and initiates were distinguished as philosophers and "men of science. But—still more strange—if, after an investigation, we glance "at the world of to-day, we see the men of this nineteenth century returning to "the wisdom of long past ages, and modern thought sustaining itself on the "wings of ancient lore." Elsewhere he says:—"The manner in which the "West is now being replenished from the East is well illustrated by Max "Müller's recently-published book, 'Biographical Essays.' In the letters to "Keshub Chunder Sen, which it contains, the professor regards the East as the "parent and teacher of the West, and the Brâhma Somâj as being far more "likely to modify Christianity than to be absorbed by it."

The following extract will be gratifying to many:—"It would, therefore, "seem that the attack of the Madras Christian College upon Madame Blavatsky "has by no means checked the movement in which she has been so conspicuous "an actor; and, apparently, the failure is nowhere more manifest than in "Madras itself. It was confidently predicted that the High Priestess of Theo-"sophy and Buddhism would not dare to show her face again in the city. "Nevertheless, she did so, and, according to the *Theosophist*, received a warm "welcome, not merely from the members of the Theosophical Societies, but "also from the students of the various colleges, and from many other persons. "She was conducted in procession from the shore to the Patcheappa Hall, and "was there presented by the students with an address of sympathy and admira-"tion, to which, among other signatures, were appended those of more than "three hundred members of the very Christian College whose professors had "assailed her. No wonder that a letter appeared shortly afterwards in the "*Madras Standard*, January 9th, 1885, questioning the wisdom of attempts to "diffuse Christianity by means of a higher education. Hitherto it has been "usual to assume that the spread of Western culture would in itself prove fatal "to Paganism; but experience and a closer acquaintance with the esoteric "philosophy of the East are rapidly dissipating that idea. Satan is now setting "in motion intellectual forces which will be more than a match for the mission-"aries, if they persist in carrying on their warfare in the old way."

Here is another extract:—"At present, the rapid spread of the Theosophic "philosophy, and—which is, perhaps, even more significant—of various ideas, "which, harmless, or even good as they may be in themselves, belong to, and "tend to unite with its system, is undeniable. Christians who take the trouble "to reconnoitre in the darkening twilight, are well aware that hostile forces are "converging from various quarters, but with unmistakable concert, upon their

" camp; while that camp itself is, alas! becoming thinned by the almost daily " desertions of those who cease to believe in the Bible as the *only* revelation " from God. . . . . We are told that occultism is the wisdom of primal ages, " a revival of the only true philosophy, held by all the great teachers of the " world, and communicated to the initiates of the mysteries. . . . . Now, so " far as the origin of Theosophy is concerned, we are quite willing to admit the " account given by our opponents. Of course, none but initiates can speak " positively on such a subject; but all that can be noticed by one outside would " certainly incline him to acquiesce in this statement. But, by comparing the " Bible with old mythologies and the opinions of modern Theosophists, we " have shown that the whole system of the mysteries was *probably* communi- " cated by those fallen angels who transgressed just before and immediately " after the flood. And such a source, though undoubtedly ancient, can scarcely " be expected to inspire confidence." The italics are ours. How far there is any *probability* in this we will leave it for our readers to decide. Thus does the author testify to the rapid and significant spread of a great revival of ancient wisdom and philosophy, only, for him, the significance lies in the fact that it is breaking down the *orthodox* teachings of the Bible; and so prejudiced is he, that where he cannot deny the inherent spirituality and lofty morality of much of the new teachings, he sees in this factor merely the craftiness of Satan, who appears as an angel of light in order that he may the better deceive us.

In conclusion, we may notice the attempt which the author makes to connect the present age with the prophesy concerning the " latter times," contained in 1 Tim., iv., 1, arguing that the three-fold movement of Spiritualism, Theosophy, and Buddhism is bringing about its fulfilment. They represent the apostacy mentioned in these verses:—" In the latter times some shall fall away from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils"; while, in order to support the words, " forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats," he does not hesitate to assert that " the command to use " the flesh of animals as food (Gen. ix., 3) is rejected by many spiritualists, and " by all Theosophists and Buddhists." This is, of course, simply untrue as regards Theosophists, and with regard to Buddhists, we would merely remark that it is no more applicable to the prophesy to-day than it was two thousand years ago.

The reader should note that the " commandment " to eat meat, given to Noah (Gen. ix., 3) is a " cosmic, or universal law," under which head he also classifies " The law of the Sabbath," " The law of substitution, that life must atone for life," " The decree that whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed," that is to say, the law of capital punishment; and, also, " the direction to multiply and replenish the earth " (Gen. ix., 1) " and God blessed Noah and his sons, and said to them, Be fruitful and mutiply and replenish the

earth." And yet elsewhere, we find that he gives it as one of the signs of the end, that the population is rapidly increasing.

Our readers will doubtless be greatly puzzled to understand what all this has to do with "cosmic or universal law."

It would be quite out of place here to enter into controversy on any of these points. Every statement made by the author is open to question, quite apart from the standpoint of Theosophy. Moreover, there has never been a time since the prophecy in Timothy was written that it has not been supposed by *orthodoxy* to be on the point of fulfilment. The early Christians themselves expected the second coming of Christ to be an event which would take place almost immediately. Moreover, we are told by the author himself that the Bishop Hippolytes confuted the teachings of the Gnostic sect of the Eucratites, who "never ate the flesh of anything that had lived, drank nothing but water, and abjured marriage," by citing the prophecy in the first of Timothy. He also says in another place, "Nor were the times of Leo the Tenth without resemblance to the days of Noah."

If, therefore, we examine any one of the points wherein the prophecy is supposed to be near its fulfilment, we cannot find that it is any more applicable to the present time, than it has been at any previous period. Those only can make it so who centre their attention on their own period, nation, or religion, and who colour all their ideas with the formulas of their own *orthodoxy*.

The only legitimate outcome of such doctrines as are to be found in this book is in the Church of Rome, and we might with much show of reason accuse the author of publishing his work as a covert attempt to lead men into that fold, which perhaps, has a better claim than any other to be called the "true Apostolic Church."

*(To be continued.)*

# THEOSOPHY AND ORTHODOXY.

By WILLIAM KINGSLAND, F.T.S.

PART II.

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## PRACTICAL HINTS TO THEOSOPHISTS.

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## AM I MY BROTHER'S KEEPER?

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# THEOSOPHY AND ORTHODOXY.

By WILLIAM KINGSLAND, F.T.S.

## PART II.

No greater contrast can be found to the "orthdoxy" we have noticed than the "orthodoxy" of "Natural Law in the Spiritual World." Here we have a recognition of what may really be called "cosmic or universal law," and a full and frank declaration of our obligation to science for teaching us those laws. The fundamental principles which the author lays down, are for the most part identical with those upon which Theosophy is based, the principal difference being that Theosophy includes in those universal laws a much wider range of phenomena than have yet been recognised by either religion or science. There is, moreover, a fallacy in the application of these principles in the book before us, which we shall presently point out, and which will not be found in the conclusions which Theosophy draws from the very same premises.

In the preface to the book the author says:—"The real problem I have "set myself may be stated in a sentence. Is there not reason to believe that "many of the Laws of the Spiritual World, hitherto regarded as occupying an "entirely separate province, are simply the Laws of the Natural World? Can "we identify the Natural Laws or any one of them, in the spiritual sphere? "That vague lines everywhere run through the Spiritual World is already "beginning to be recognised. Is it possible to link them with those great lines "running through the visible universe which we call the Natural Laws, or are "they fundamentally distinct? In a word, is the Supernatural Natural or "Unnatural?"

We need scarcely remark that Theosophy hardly considers this question worth stating, for it shows it to have been settled ages ago. The unity of all things, the correspondence between the microcosm and the macrocosm, the subjective and the objective, the natural and the spiritual, has been a fundamental axiom with occult science from the earliest ages. But when we come to the applications which the author makes of this principle we come upon a fallacy which runs through the whole argument, for when the author speaks of the "Laws of the Spiritual World," we find that he means simply those dogmas

which have accumulated round the teachings of Christ; in other words—orthodoxy. Now, it is doubtless a great step for orthodoxy to set itself this problem as to whether the supernatural is natural or unnatural, and thus we hail the book as a step in advance, albeit a tardy one.

Here is a quotation which illustrates the fallacy we have pointed out, and which runs all through the book:—"Natural Law, could it be traced "in the spiritual world, would have an important scientific value—it would offer "religion a new credential. The effect of the introduction of law among the "scattered phenomena of nature has simply been to make science, to transform "knowledge into eternal truth. The same crystallizing touch is needed for "religion. Can it be said that the phenomena of the spiritual world are other "than scattered? Can we shut our eyes to the fact that the religious opinions "of mankind are in a state of flux? . . . . . Is it not plain that the one thing "thinking men are waiting for is the introduction of Law among the phenomena "of the spiritual world? When that comes we shall offer to such men a truly 'scientific theology. And the reign of Law will transform the whole spiritual "world as it has already transformed the natural world." The fallacy here is very apparent. The "phenomena of the spiritual world," of which he speaks are the "religious opinions of mankind," viz., "orthodoxy"; while, in respect to the last statement of the paragraph, we should like to ask, how has the reign of Law "already transformed the natural world"? It has certainly transformed men's *ideas* of the natural world, but these *ideas* are not the *phenomena* of the natural world; and the author can hardly have intended to claim that nature is something different in itself and in its phenomena, since men discovered the universality of Natural Law. Have not the Laws of Nature always been the same, whatever men's ideas (orthodox science) conceived of them? It is certainly not merely possible, but highly probable that the discovery of the Reign of Law—the extension of Natural Law, observe—in the Spiritual World will transform the whole of men's ideas with regard to that world. But this is only saying in other words, that just as orthodox science has been transformed by the discovery of the universality of Law, so will be orthodox religion. For the "religious opinions of mankind" are no more connected, as cause and effect, with the *phenomena* of the Spiritual World, than the scientific opinions in any age are connected with the *phenomena* of the Natural World. Surely the "Spiritual World" is something which exists altogether *sui generis* as regards men's ideas and doctrines concerning it, just as the "Natural World" exists, and always has and will exist, altogether apart from any scientific knowledge or theories in reference to it. To say, therefore, that "the reign of Law will transform the whole Spiritual World as it has already transformed the Natural World," is to make the "Natural World" consist of current scientific doctrines, and the "Spiritual World" of orthodox dogmas.

This would be a fallacy even if the "Natural" and the "Spiritual" were

wo separate regions, so to speak, marked off from each other by no connecting links, but it applies with double force when, according to the whole contention of the author, we find that there is really no separation between the natural and the spiritual, but that the Laws of the one are the Laws of the other. He says :—"The position we have been led to take up is not that the Spiritual "Laws are analogous to the Natural Laws, but that *they are the same Laws.*" The italics are his own.

Thus we see that, however accurate may be his premises, his conclusions have no connection with them in any sense, a fallacy which is still further disclosed when he comes to deal with the subject in detail.

The following is eminently satisfactory as a statement of principle :—"The "only legitimate questions one dare put to nature are those which concern "universal human good and the Divine interpretation of things. These, I con- "ceive, may be there actually studied at first hand, and before their purity "is soiled by human touch. We have truth in Nature as it came from God, "and it has to be read with the same unbiassed mind, the same open eye, the "same faith, and the same reverence as all other Revelation. All that is found "there, whatever its place in Theology, whatever its orthodoxy or heterodoxy, "whatever its narrowness or its breadths, we are bound to accept as Doctrine "from which on the lines of Science there is no escape." But how does he apply this? He goes on to say :—"When this presented itself to me as a "method, I felt it to be due to it . . . . . to begin again at the beginning, "and reconstruct my Spiritual World step by step." Here we see plainly the use of the term "Spiritual World" as synonymous with his own ideas respecting it, and it is just as absurd to a speak of "reconstructing" one's Spiritual World as it would be to speak of "reconstructing" our Natural World. We may reconstruct our *ideas* of these any number of times over—and this is the history of all religion and all science—but these ideas will not alter or modify or "transform" one single Law or phenomenon in either the "Natural" or the "Spiritual" World.

It is, of course, quite a common and conventional way of using the term "Spiritual World," to denote the region of religious emotion. We hear people remark that the Spiritual World is far more real to them than the Material World, by which they simply mean that they live in their religious ideals much more intensely than in those matters which concern their life on earth. If, therefore, the term had been used consistently in this sense throughout the whole of the book, it might have been valuable as pointing out a certain *analogy* between Natural Law and Christian orthodoxy.

But the author is anxious to point out that it is not a question of *analogy* but of *identity*, and therefore we say that there is no connection whatever, as cause and effect, between religious opinions of any kind, and the Laws or phenomena of either the Natural or the Spiritual Worlds as these are defined by

him in laying down his premises. The Spiritual World *per se*, or as a natura sequence, or extension, or unity with the Natural World, must be some thing which is, always has been, and always will be, the same, whatever may be the religions, philosophies, or sciences at any period of the world's history.

It is curious to note that the author says :—"The extension of the analogy "to Laws, or rather the extension of the Laws themselves so far as is known "to me, is new." Probably this is so with most orthodox people, who refuse to believe that there is any light or safety outside of the Bible, but it is just this principle of "the extension of the Laws themselves," which it is the province of Theosophy to teach, and which is shown to have been familiar from the remotest periods to the custodians of occult science.

Those who belong to the "orthodoxy" of the school to which the author of "Earth's Earliest Ages" belongs, would do well to ponder these words :—"Children do not need Laws, except Laws in the sense "of commandments. They repose with simplicity on authority, and "ask no questions. But there comes a time, as the world reaches "its manhood, when they will ask questions, and stake, moreover, "everything on the answers. That time is now. Hence, we must exhibit our "doctrines, not lying athwart the lines of the world's thinking, in a place "reserved, and therefore shunned, for the Great Exception; but in their kin-"ship to all truth, and in their Law-relation to the whole of Nature."

Again, what better statement could we have of the Theosophical doctrine than the following :—"The law of continuity furnishes an *à priori* argument for "the position we are attempting to establish of the most convincing kind—of "such a kind, indeed, as to seem to our mind final. Briefly indicated, the "ground taken up is this, that if Nature be a harmony, man in all his relations "—physical, mental, moral, and spiritual—falls to be included within its circle. "It is altogether unlikely that man spiritual should be violently separated in "all conditions of growth, development and life, from man physical. It is, "indeed, difficult to conceive that one set of principles should guide the natural "life, and these at a certain period—the very point where they are needed—"suddenly give place to another set of principles altogether new and unrelated. "Nature has never taught us to expect such a catastrophe. She has nowhere "prepared us for it. And man cannot in the nature of things, in the nature of "thought, in the nature of language, be separated into two such incoherent "halves."

We reply that she never has been so separated in the one "Secret Doc-trine," or "Wisdom Religion," but only in the *exoteric* dogmas and formulas of that which now passes as Religion.

The following is also the teaching of occult science :—"The first in the "field was the Spiritual World . . . . . the visible universe has been

"developed from the unseen. . . . . There is a point in time when the "energy of the universe must come to an end; and that which has its end in "time cannot be infinite, it must have also had a beginning in time. Hence the "unseen existed before the seen." Precisely so; but what is this but a statement of the doctrine of emanation and reabsorption? For, if the visible universe has made its appearance out of the invisible or "Spiritual World," and will again disappear into that region, it will do so by virtue of that which is now "matter," rebecoming "spirit." If the law of continuity holds good, as the author desires to prove, from the natural into the spiritual, it is at least strong evidence of the doctrine of the identity of matter and spirit in the "Absolute"; that is to say, that spirit and matter are the two opposite poles, or manifestations, of one and the same thing. In confirmation of this, we may quote what he says later on:—"The lines of the spiritual existed first, and it was natural to expect that "when the 'intelligence resident in the unseen' proceeded to frame the mate-"rial universe, He should go upon the lines already laid down. He would, in "short, simply project the higher Laws downward, so that the Natural World "would become an incarnation, a visible representation, a working model of "the spiritual. The whole function of the material world lies here. The "world is not a thing that *is*; it *is* not. It is a thing that teaches, yet not "even a thing—a show that shows, a teaching shadow. However useless the "demonstration otherwise, philosophy does well in proving that matter is a "nonentity. We work with it as a mathematician with an *x*. The reality is "alone Spiritual. . . . . When shall we learn the true mysticism of one "who was yet far from being a mystic—'We look not at the things which are "'seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen "'are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal,' (2 Cor. iv., 18)? "The visible is the ladder up to the invisible; the temporal is but the scaffold-"ing of the eternal. And when the last immaterial souls have climbed through "this material to God, the scaffolding shall be taken down, and the earth dis-"solved with fervent heat—not because it was base, but because its work is "done."

One recognises Theosophy in almost every line of this, and were it not that the author indulges in the fallacy we have already pointed out, he would be obliged to state his conclusions in terms of Theosophy and occult science instead of in terms of orthodox Christianity.

Perhaps the most important part of the work is that in which the author deals with the law of Biogenesis. This law states that *life*—that is to say, that which we know as *life* in the physical world—can only come from life. "Omne vivum ex vivo."

It is opposed to the theory which has sometimes been advanced of "Spontaneous Generation." Let us now see how he applies this law. He says:—"Translating from the language of Science into thatof Religion, the

"theory of Spontaneous Generation is simply that a man may become gradually "better and better until, in course of the process, he reaches that quality of "religious nature known as Spiritual Life. This life is not something added *ab extra* to the natural man; it is the normal and appropriate development 'of the natural man. Biogenesis opposes to this the whole doctrine of Regeneration. The Spiritual Life is the gift of the Living Spirit. The 'spiritual man is no mere development of the natural man. He is a New Creation born from above."

The "Spiritual Life" is the gift (or rather manifestation) of the Living Spirit undoubtedly, but what are we to understand by its being a "quality of religious nature"? As we have pointed out before, the Spiritual as an extension of the Natural must exist independently of the quality of any religious life whatsoever.

It is just this constant interchange of the terms "Religion" and "Spiritual Life" which destroys the whole force of his argument. Here is another instance of the way in which this is done:—"Life cannot develop out "of anything that is not Life. There is no Spontaneous Generation in Re- "ligion any more than in Nature. Christ is the source of Life in the Spiritual "World; and he that hath the Son hath Life, and he that hath not the Son, "whatever else he may have, hath not Life." Here the word "Religion" is deliberately substituted for "Spiritual Life."

Elsewhere he speaks of the "spiritually inorganic and the spiritually organic," and he also says:—"The spiritual faculties are organized in the "spiritual protoplasm of the soul, just as other faculties are organized in the "protoplasm of the body. The plant is made of materials which have once "been inorganic. An organizing principle not belonging to their kingdom "lays hold of them and elaborates them until they have correspondences with "the kingdom to which the organizing principle belonged. . . . . In the "Spiritual World, similarly, we find an organizing principle at work "among the materials of the organic kingdom, performing a further miracle, but "not a different kind of miracle, producing organizations of a novel kind, but "not by a novel method."

Thus he is continually playing fast and loose with the terms "Spiritual World" or "Spiritual Life," using the terms sometimes to express a set of *ideas* or *emotions* known as "Religion," and sometimes as an extension of the Natural or Material World.

If, now, we endeavour to elucidate the meaning which he attaches to the term *Life*, we find that he accepts the definition of Herbert Spencer, that Life is "The continuous adjustment of internal to external relations," or, in other words, "correspondence with environment." Eternal Life is further defined thus:—"Perfect correspondence would be perfect life. Were there no "changes in the environment but such as the organism had adapted changes to

"meet, and were it never to fail in the efficiency with which it met them, there "would be eternal existence and eternal knowledge."

We now take these definitions in connection with those theological doctrines which he puts forward as fundamental laws of the Spiritual Life. "He that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son hath not life" (1 John v., 12). "This is life eternal, that they might know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent" (John xvii., 3). "Except a man be born of water and the spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God" (John iii., 5). How does the author apply these statements, and harmonize them with the scientific definition of *Life* just given?

He says:—"There is no Spontaneous Generation in Religion any more "than in Nature. Christ is the source of life in the Spiritual World; He that "hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son, whatever else he may have, "hath not life." Here, as we have already pointed out, the word *religion* is used as a synonym for *Spiritual Life*. He also says:—"The attitude of the "natural man, again, with reference to the spiritual, is a subject on which the "New Testament is equally pronounced. Not onl in relation to the Spiritua "man, but to the whole Spiritual World, the natural man is regarded as *dead*. "The natural world is to the Spiritual as the inorganic to the organic." And elsewhere:—"The breath of God, blowing where it listeth, touches with its "mystery of Life the dead souls of men, bears them across the bridgeless gulf "between the natural and the spiritual, between the spiritually inorganic and "the spiritually organic, endows them with its own high qualities, and develops "within them these new secret faculties, by which those who are born again are "said to *see the kingdom of God*."

In the above paragraph we have a new element, viz.: the *soul*, introduced which tends very much to increase the confusion in the use of the term *Spiritual Life*. It would appear now that the *natural man*, spoken of in this paragraph as being *dead*, is the *spiritually inorganic*, viz., the *soul*. The next question which naturally suggests itself is, what is the nature of this third element, or *soul*, which is now introduced between the *natural* and the *spiritual?* Is it in any sense material, and does it survive the death of the body, whether it be touched with the "breath of God" or not?

The *mineral*, we are told by the author, is touched with the "mystery of life," and brought up, ennobled and transformed to the "living sphere." But the mineral, it may be argued, does not cease to be a mineral when it becomes part of the vegetable kingdom. The atom of oxygen or carbon belongs to the mineral kingdom just as much when it is imprisoned in the organism of a plant, as when it is in its free state, and it inevitably returns to that state sooner or later. There is no analogy, therefore, between that life which touches the mineral and brings it into the vegetable kingdom, and the life which touches the "dead soul," and gives it "life eternal."

Carrying out the author's idea, however, that the man who has this spiritual life in Christ has life eternal; that his *soul* is transformed by that life from the dead *natural* world to the living *spiritual* world, we have next to inquire what becomes of the *soul* of the man who has not been touched by this life, the soul of the man who does not "know Christ." His answer is that it first of all degenerates and then dies. But we must observe that he attaches a special meaning to the world *death*. He says: "The question of life or death to a man "is simply the question of the amount of remaining environment he is able to "compass." After defining the spiritual as the *outer circle* of the natural, he says:—"Now of the great mass of living organisms, of the great mass of men, "is it not to be affirmed that they are out of correspondence with this outer circle? "Suppose, to make the final issue more real, we give this outermost circle of "environment a name. Suppose we call it God. Suppose, also, we substitute a "word for 'correspondence' to express more intimately the personal relation. "Let us call it communion. We can now determine accurately the spiritual "relation of different sections of mankind. Those who are in communion with "God live, those who are not are dead." No Theosophist will object to this, only he prefers to call this "outermost circle of enviromnent" *Atma*—the seventh principle—instead of *God*, for the latter term has accumulated round it a thousand theological and dogmatic conceptions which he can by no means accept. But by whatever name it may be called, it is *spiritually* the one universal Divine principle, the *inner* life, and sustainer, as well as the *outer* environment of all things. This is supported by what the author says in another place:—"God is not confined to the outermost circle of environment. He lives and "moves and has His being in the whole. Those who seek Him in the further "zone can only find a part." We can only remark that this *intra* cosmic God must be very different from the *extra* cosmic God of the orthodox theology. Yet this is pure Theosophical teaching all the same, for it is the "God within him," the "Higher Self" whom the Theosophist seeks. And, recognising also the true Divinity of the "Son," who is "one with the Father," he understands and realises to the fullest extent that "No man cometh unto the Father, but by me" (John xiv., 6). Read the Gospel of John, where this mystical union of the "Father" and the "Son" is the constant theme, as also in the two Epistles (and observe that it is only in these that the subject is thus set forth in various aspects), and then transfer the idea in a *spiritual* sense, and apart from its counterpart, reflection, or analogy on the material and physical plane, and you have the key to the mystery of the Incarnation and Divinity of Christ. If God be *intra* cosmic in His highest spiritual manifestation, so must Christ, for He is "one with the Father." But from the highest spiritual plane down to the lowest material (our present objective world) the same mystery is reflected and repeated. The microcosm is the counterpart of the macrocosm; the universe is not a diversity, but a *Unity*. "As above, so below," is the old Kabalistic axiom. And

this is exactly what the author states, when he says that the Laws of the Natural "*are the same Laws*" as those of the Spiritual, and that "God is not confined to the outermost circle of environment, He lives and moves and has His Being in the Whole."

"Know ye not that ye are the temple of God," said Paul—another Initiate or "Master Builder." This is the great central truth of the "Secret Doctrine" under whatever *form* it may have been taught in all ages. Those who will read the Bible in the light of one or more of the "seven keys," will find it throughout the whole of the Old Testament under every variety of allegory; in the story of the "fall," in Noah's ark, the Tabernacle in the Wilderness, and Solomon's Temple, where "there was neither hammer nor axe nor any tool of iron heard in the house while it was building." But, "Moses put a veil upon his face," and "until this very day at the reading of the old covenant (or Testament) the same veil remaineth unlifted" (2 Cor. iii., 14) and Paul goes on to say :—"Whensoever a man shall turn to the Lord, the veil is taken away. Now, the Lord is the Spirit." The veil remains, therefore, with those who look upon these things with the eye of the flesh, and not with the eye of the *spirit*, with those who turn not to the Lord, that is to say, with those who understand these mysteries in their lowest material and physical aspect only, mistaking the *form* for the *spirit*, the "quality of religious nature known as Spiritual Life," for that Spiritual Life which is free from all forms or qualities of religion whatsoever; or, as St. Paul says :—"Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty." Theosophy endeavours to teach this, but those who look upon Theosophy as a *creed*, at variance with their own "orthodox" creed, will never be able to understand it.

We must, however, now endeavour to elucidate what it is that the author understands by the death of the soul. The question of questions is, whether the "spiritually inorganic," viz., the "soul," survives the death of the body if it does not happen to have been touched with this mystery of spiritual life.

He says :—"There is no analogy between the Christian religion and, say, "Buddhism or the Mohammedan religion. There is no true sense in which a "man can say, He that hath Buddha hath life. Buddha has nothing to do with "life." This may be perfectly true of Buddha, the historical and physical man, and is just as true of Christ, the historical and physical man; but *Buddhi*, the sixth principle, the Divine vehicle of *Atma*, the *Father*, *has* everything to do with this *Life* in its mystical and spiritual aspect, and in just the same way as *Christ* Christos.

But, taking the author at his word, we are naturally led to ask, What, then, becomes of the millions of souls who profess Buddhism instead of Christianity? The following statement would seem to indicate that, in the author's view, there is for them no future life :—"The broad impression "gathered from the utterances of the Founder of the spiritual kingdom is that

"the number of organisms to be included in it is to be comparatively small. "'Many are called, but few are chosen.' It is an open secret, to be read in a "hundred analogies from the world around, that of the millions of possible "entrants for advancement in any department of Nature the number ultimately "selected for preferment is small. . . . . Some mineral, but not all, becomes "vegetable; some vegetable, but not all, becomes animal; some animal, but "not all, becomes human; some human, but not all, becomes divine."

We have already pointed out a fallacy in this statement, with regard to the transference from one kingdom to another. We must, however, take the statement as it stands as an indication of the author's view.

Elsewhere, however, he comes very near to the Theosophical doctrine, that the *soul*—using this term now to express the real ego, the individuality—reincarnates, over and over again, until, finally, as the result of evolution—for if evolution be a *natural* law, it must also be a *spiritual* law—it does become "touched with this mystery of Life," and having passed through all the lower forms, mineral, vegetable, animal, human, it reaches, at length, at the end of its long pilgrimage, that life of "perfect correspondence with environment," which constitutes "eternal life"; the At-one-ment with God through Christ, the merging of the *finite* consciousness into the *infinite*.

Needless to add that this is but in other words the Buddhist doctrine of Nirvana:—

"Seeking nothing, he gains all;
Foregoing self, the universe grows 'I':
If any teach Nirvana is to cease,
Say unto such they lie.
If any teach Nirvana is to live,
Say unto such they err; not knowing this,
Or what light shines beyond their broken lamps,
Nor lifeless, timeless bliss."

What shall we say then? Is it Christianity alone which can give this divine life to the soul. The answer must be both Yes and No. If by Christianity is meant the theological, dogmatic, materialised, orthodox system called by that name, then the answer must be emphatically No.

Religious life of any kind or quality has no necessary connection w th that which exists independently of all religion—the Soul of Man, and the Divine Spark within him.

If by Christianity, however, is meant those truths which are the same—under whatever *form* may have been taught—in all ages; the inner mystery of Divine Sonship, then the reply must be Yes. "This is life eternal, to know thee and the son whom thou hast sent," was taught ages before Christ came to teach it in a new form. *Orthodoxy*, however, ever ties men to a certain fixed *environment* of creeds and dogmas, claiming authority and infallibility. But the Theosophist has entered into a Spiritual Life whic

is free from such restrictions. St. Paul understood what this freedom was. "All things are lawful unto me; but all things are not expedient," he says.

What does it matter whether this principle of eternal life be called "Christos" or "Krishna"? It is ever that divine life towards which all things are tending. What does it matter whether we call the "outermost circle of environment" *God*, or *Parabrahm?* The *spiritual* truth is ever the same, whatever orthodoxy may teach.

In conclusion, we may recommend every Theosophist to read "Natural Law in the Spiritual World," for not merely will it tend to enlarge his ideas as to the domain of natural law, but will enable him to understand more clearly the real esoteric meaning of Christianity, and its connection with the one universal Wisdom Religion, or Theo-sophia. But it is only those who can understand the "Secret Doctrine" *spiritually* who will be able to do this; for Theosophy as a *creed* is of little more value than Christianity as a creed. Both are a LIFE, not a creed, and he who realizes this Life will understand both, while he to whom the Spiritual Life is only a "quality of religious nature," will be as unable to understand the spiritual teachings of Theosophy as he is to understand the spiritual mystery of Christ. Truly, "the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life."

Finally, we would say in the words of Krishna-Christos:—

"But—higher, deeper, innermost—abides
Another Life, not like the life of sense,
Escaping sight, unchanging. This endures
When all created things have passed away.
This is that Life named the Unmanifest,
The Infinite! the All! the Uttermost.
Thither arriving none return. That Life
Is mine, and I am there! and, Prince! by faith
Which wanders not, there is a way to come
Thither. I, the PURUSHA, I, who spread
The Universe around me—in whom dwell
All living Things—may so be reached and seen!
Richer than holy fruit on Vedas growing.
Greater than gifts, better than prayer or fast
Such wisdom is! The Yôgé, this way knowing,
Comes to the Utmost Perfect Peace at last."

—*Bhagavad-Gitâ*, VIII.

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# PRACTICAL HINTS FOR THEOSOPHISTS.

THERE are probably hundreds of sincere members of the Theosophical Society who are willing and anxious to help "the cause," who yet, from one hindrance or another, find, when they balance their yearly accounts, that they have not given a solitary five-pound-note to help the work which, as "Fellows," they must have so much at heart. This is naturally distressing to them as individuals, and hurtful to the society at large, in that it cramps its power for usefulness.

How can this state of things be altered?

We all feel that it is humiliating to us as members of this Society to reflect that money is not forthcoming to carry on an energetic propagandism, to know that even the least expensive, most necessary, and most popular method of awakening public interest, is threatened with extinction for want of funds, and that the support which is received by the Society's English official organ, *Lucifer*, comes from outsiders, and not, as it should do, from those who have sufficiently appreciated the importance of Theosophical teaching to solicit the privilege of joining the greatest reformatory movement that has arisen since Jesus of Nazareth preached to an unheeding world.

But it is want of knowledge, want of thought, that is answerable for the unsatisfactory state of the treasury of the Theosophical Society. It has been taken for granted that all members must know how much money is needed to carry on an active war against the crass materialism that is eating the spiritual life out of Western nations. Now, it is quite possible that very many have not known, that very many do not even now know, how much the cause is hindered for lack of pence.

It has been taken for granted that all members would have enough commonsense to divine the wants of the war chest. But commonsense is a most rare possession. Possibly commonsense and thoughtfulness might have been enough to enlighten us, but we belong to a nation that is not slow to make its wants known, and when no one asks us to put our hands in our purses we come to the conclusion that the contents thereof are not desired.

So it has come to pass that this one and that one has had a subscription, while the Theosophical Society and its needs have been overlooked and forgotten; We very much reverse the children's saying: "Those that ask must not have,' though we show our faith in the witty rejoinder, "Those that don't ask don't want."

But the ice has been broken, an authoritative statement has been made,

and all members ought by this time to be aware that money is urgently needed, and knowing this they ought to make it their personal business to see that the coffers are well supplied with the requisite funds for keeping up an active propaganda.

We will suppose, for politeness sake, that the means at the command of the "Fellows" is strictly limited. We will suppose, for the sake of courtesy that the majority of the members of the T. S. are poor; but it is a supposition requiring a great deal of courtesy to cover it, as the teaching of Theosophy in its present stage scarcely appeals to the indigent. The question, then, before us is, "How are poor 'Fellows' to spare money to carry on the work they believe to be of supreme importance to the human race?"

It would be an insult to suggest that anyone whose eyes have been opened to a wider range of vision, from whose heart has fallen the weight of hopeless oppression, that the seeming injustice of the scheme of creation as taught by the churches imposed, can be indifferent to the diffusion of that knowledge which has conferred upon him so priceless a blessing.

We dare not think our brothers indifferent, but we may suppose them to be poor. What can the poor do, and how can they do it?

The present writer would be very sorry to say anything disagreeable, or to draw odious comparisons, and, being a F. T. S., may be allowed to think that the members of the Theososphical Society are, as a body, vastly superior to the members of any other society whatever, much more to the humble, ignorant "Salvationists," yet—from the self-denial of these poor, unlettered, ranting, rollicking "lads" and "lasses," who are, many of them, only half fed at the best of times, the "Army" received as the proceeds of this year's (1889) "Denial Week" no less a sum than twenty thousand and forty-one pounds. "How is it accomplished by those who only have bare necessities?" was asked a pleasant-faced Salvationist.

"Well, you see, one goes without sugar, another without tea or meat, or may be without both, for 'Denial Week,' and sends the money these would have cost to the General."

Self-denial is an article in the Theosophist's creed. Shall we show wisdom in refusing to take a hint from those whose methods, I fear, too many of us are inclined to despise? What if we made our self-denial extend over the three hundred and sixty-five days of the year? What if we took to heart this world's woes? What if we desire its enlightenment as earnestly as these children of privation and toil desire, what they believe to be, its salvation? Would it be necessary for our reverenced teacher to remind us that "the monthly deficits of *Lucifer* have been cheerfully borne by two of our brothers"?

We all suffer more or less, some of us are borne down by the complicated requirements, the senseless superfluities of social life. Might it not be worth some effort to introduce, even if only in our own immediate circle, a simpler

mode of living. The saving thus effected in money, time, and health would enable us with ease to carry out our obligations to the T. S., and would, moreover, help to start a reformatory movement for the simplification of life that is a felt want in our day. Why do most of us find that there is such a small sum left when our personal expenses have been met to devote to public objects? Is it that our tastes are luxurious, our palates difficult to satisfy, our vanity inordinate? or is it that we have got into a social groove and will not take the trouble to get out of it—do not look ahead to see whither it is leading us?

Want of thought can hardly serve as a justification for a course of action that threatens to land us in practical, even though unintentional, selfishness.

Pleasant, social intercourse, dainty dinners, charming costumes are all very well in their way, but if they can only be indulged at the expense of work neglected, of unpaid subscriptions, of deafness to the call of duty, they cost more than they are worth.

But what is our duty some may say? Are we not to indulge our legitimate tastes and fancies?

Yes, decidedly, so that they are legitimate. But let us be practical, let us compare relative values. Money is powerful, but it cannot be spent in two ways at once. What do members of the T. S. want to do? If they wish to aid in the establishment of a universal brotherhood of humanity, they must themselves act in a fraternal manner. Now, surely it is no brotherly action to spend money upon personal indulgences while surrounded by starving thousands. And thousands are starving, not only for the food that goes to nourish the body, but for the knowledge that should nourish the mind. Others, again, and their name is legion, are kept in a state of semi-starvation for the want of that blessed leisure which alone can enable them to partake of the nourishment around them. It is not only the overwrought seamstress, or the sweater's victim, that pines in the midst of plenty, from sheer inability to snatch sufficient time to satisfy the craving of mind and spirit. Many a man in the pursuit of wealth has converted himself into a machine. He eats and sleeps to keep himself going, but all his energies are exhausted in the fatal, frantic struggle to get the wherewithal to keep up his suburban villa, clothe his wife and daughters, send his son to college, and leave behind enough to enable his womenkind to perpetuate the useless existence to which they have been trained. And these same women, are they more fortunate? Have they more leisure? Not at all. Their lives are consumed in a long, unceasing effort to make a hundred pounds do the work of two. To this they dedicate their lives, to this they sacrifice their health, their temper, or nerves, as the case may be; for this they become deaf to the cry of the distressed needlewoman—cheap clothes they must and will have—the plaint of the never-finished domestic. It has become a "duty,"—might we not almost say *the duty*, to make a "good appearance," and many women are giving up all that elevates and consecrates a home for its fulfilment

Of late years we have heard a great deal about dress reform and food reform, but the motive power to give vitality to the movement has been wanting. As long as we are living for ourselves chiefly, it is of no great consequence that our time and our forces are wasted in one way rather than in another; but when we realize that the hunger and nakedness of the destitute are demanding of each one of us a remedy, then we feel that the time and money spent on our frills and flounces mean the shivering of some half-clad child, who might have been warmly clothed with that which has been spent upon our superfluities, the matter receives another aspect. The same with food reform. We may become vegetarians, and think that this is enough, but this we do for the purification of our personal system, and with no regard to its effect on our neighbours; if, being vegetarians, we require elaborate dishes that take long hours to prepare, we do little or nothing to solve the problem of how to get food to the hungry. Some small saving in the cost of living we do effect, but if this is balanced against a great expenditure of labour in the preparation of food, it should not be enough to satisfy Theosophists. Nothing but the least possible expenditure upon mere personal gratification should content those who feel that to feed and clothe others is as imperative a duty as to clothe and feed ourselves. At least this should be so in the existing state of the world, when hunger and degradation, that money might lessen, are suffered by thousands. If to share one's last loaf is the duty of a Theosophist, surely it is a not less urgent duty so to order the daily life that the blessings of enlightenment may be shared with as many as possible. Duty, we read in the "Key to Theosophy," is "that which is due to humanity, to our fellowmen, neighbours, family, and especially that which we owe to all those who are poorer and more helpless than we are ourselves." This is the debt which, if left unpaid during life, leaves us spiritually insolvent and moral bankrupts in our next incarnation. These are solemn words, and it may seem to some that the little details of daily life are too insignificant to be treated with solemnity, but let such reflect that the noblest, most heroic life is made up of trivial details that win their grand total only when the final account is rendered.

KATE E. MILLS, F.T.S.

# AM I MY BROTHER'S KEEPER?

—GENESIS iv., 9.

*Reprinted from the* PATH, *August*, 1887.

MANY students, in their search for light, find divers problems presented to them for solution; questions so puzzling from the contradictory aspects which they present, that the true course is difficult of attainment for those who seek Right Living.

One of these questions, Is it our duty to interfere if we see a wrong being done? arises.

The question of duty is one that can be decided fully only by each individual himself. No code of laws or table of rules unchanging and inflexible will be given, under which all must act, or find duty.

We are so ignorant or so newly acquainted with a portion of the Divine Will that generally we are poorly fitted to declare decisively what is wrong, or evil.

Each man is the law unto himself—the law as to right and wrong, good and evil. No other individual may violate the law of that man, any more than any other law, without producing the inevitable result, the penalty of an infracted law. I dare not declare that any one thing or course is evil in *another*. For me it may be evil. I am not wise enough to know what it is for another. Only the Supreme knows, for He only can read the heart, the mind, the soul of each. "Thou shalt not judge," saith the sacred writing.

My duty is clear in many places, but in the performing of it I may neither act as a judge or hold animosity, anger, or disgust.

Were a man to abuse an animal, surely I must interfere to prevent suffering to the helpless, dumb and weak, for so we are enjoined. This done, my duty lies in helping my brother, for he knew not what he did.

My aim is to find Wisdom, and my duty, to do away with ignorance when ever it is encountered. His act was caused by ignorance. Were a man to abuse wife or child through unwise use of wine or drug, truly it is my duty to prevent suffering or sorrow for either wife or child, and also to prevent greater misery—perhaps murder. They are human beings, my fellows. This done, my duty lies toward the man, not in condemnation, but seeking the cause that makes him unwise, strive to alleviate—if not free him from it. He also is my brother.

If men steal, lie, cheat, betray the innocent or are betrayed by the knowing, my duty lies in preventing for others, if I may, sorrow and anguish,

pain and want, misery, suicide or bloodshed, which may be, for *others*, the result of these acts.

My duty lies in preventing effects such as these from love for and a desire to help all men, not because men's actions seem to me wrong or their courses evil. I know not the causes of their actions, nor all the reasons why they are permitted. How, then, may I say this or that man is evil, this or that thing is wrong? The *effects* may to *me* seem evil, inasmuch as such appears to be the result for others. Here my duty is to prevent evil to other mortals in the way that seems most wise.

" Finally this is better that one do
His own task as he may, even though he fail,
Than take tasks not his own, though they seem good."
—*Song Celestial (Bhagavat-Gita).*

He who seeks " the small old path " has many duties to perform. His duty to mankind, his family—nature— himself and his creator, but duty here means something very different from that which is conveyed by the time and lip-worn word, *Duty*. Our comprehension of the term is generally based upon society's or man's selfish interpretation. It is quite generally thought that duty means the performance of a series of acts which *others* think *I* ought to perform, whereas it more truly means the performance of actions by me which *I know* are good for *others*, or the wisest at the moment.

It would be quite dangerous for me to take upon myself the duty of another, either because he told me it was good, or that it was duty. It would be dangerous for him and me if I assumed that which he felt it was good to do, for that is his duty and cannot be mine. That which is given him to do I cannot do for him. That which is given me to do no living thing can do for me. If I attempt to do another's duty, then I assume that which belongs not to me, was not given me. I am a thief, taking that which does not belong to me. My brother, consenting thereto, becomes an idler, fails to comprehend the lesson, shifts the responsibility, and between us we accomplish nothing. We are instructed to do good. That is duty. In doing good all that we do is covered, that for which we are here is being accomplished, and that is—duty. We are enjoined to do good *where it is safe*. Not safe for ourselves, but safe for the objects toward which our duty points. Often we behold beings suffering great wrong. Our emotions prompt us to rush forward and in some way prevent the continuance of it. Still the wise man knows it is not safe. Were he to do so, his efforts would only arouse the antagonism and passions of superior numbers, whose unrestrained and ungoverned wills would culminate in the perpetration of greater wrongs upon the one who already suffers. It is safe to do good, or my duty, after I find how to do it in the way that will not create evil, harms others or begets greater evils.

For him who seeks the upward way there is no duty—for nothing is a duty

He has learned that the word conveys an erroneous meaning when applied to the doings of the Seeker. It implies the performance of that which savours of a task, or a certain required or demanded act necessary before progress is made or other deeds be performed. Of duty, there is none such as this.

He learns to do good, and that which appears the wisest at the time, forgetting self so fully that he only knows his doing good to others—forgetting self so far that he forgets to think whether he is doing his duty or not—entering Nirvana to this extent, that he does not remember that he is doing his duty

That *for him* is duty.

"Resist not evil," saith one of the Wise. He who said this knew full well his duty, and desired to convey to us knowledge. That he did not mean men to sit idly by while ignorance let slip the dogs of pain, anguish, suffering, want, and murder, is surely true. That he did not mean men to kneel in puerile simulation of holiness by the roadside, while their fellow men suffer torture, wrong, or abuse, is still more true. That he did not intend a man to sit silently a looker-on while that which is called evil worked its will upon others, when by the lifting of a finger, perhaps, its intentions might be hwarted and annulled—is truth itself. These all would be nelgect of a portion of the whole duty of man. He who taught that men should "resist not evil" desired them only to forget themselves. Men think that all things which are disagreeable to them are evil. By resistance he meant complaint, anger and objection to or against the inevitable, disagreeable or sorrowful things of life, that come to self, and he *did not* mean man to go forth in the guise of a martyr, hugging these same penalties to his bosom, while he proclaims himself thereby the possessor of the magic *pass word* (which he will never own and which is never uttered in that way), *I have Suffered.*

If men revile, persecute or wrong one, why resist? Perhaps it is evil, but so long as it affects one's-self only, it is no great matter. If want, sorrow, or pain come to one, why resist or cry out? In the resistance or war against them we create greater evils. Coming to one's-self they should have little weight, while at the same time they carry invaluable lessons in their hands. Rightly studied, they cause one to forget himself in the desire to assist others when similarly placed, and the Lotus of duty—or love for man—to bloom out of the Nile mire of life. Resist not evil, for it is inseparable from life. It is our duty to live, and accept uncomplainingly, all of life. Resist not evil, but rather learn of it all the good which, in reality, it only veils.

Seek in it, as well as in the gleaming good, for *the Mystery*, and there will come forth from both the self-same form upon whose forehead is written "Duty," which, being interpreted, meaneth efforts for the good of all other men, and over whose heart is written: "I am my brother's keeper."

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THE

# SOUL ACCORDING TO THE QABALAH.

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## SYMPATHY.

BY

KATHARINE HILLARD.

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# THE SOUL ACCORDING TO THE QABALAH.

## PART I.

*A paper read before the Psychological Society of Munich, March 5, 1887, by*
C. DE LEININGEN.

### THE SOUL DURING LIFE.

AMONGST those questions which have chiefly occupied philosophy and the exact sciences, none have held so prominent a place for humanity at large as those concerning the immortality and spirituality of the Soul.

Everywhere, and in all ages, various and contradictory systems and dogmas have rapidly succeeded one another on this subject, and the word Soul has been used to explain the most opposite states of existence and the most different shades of opinion. Of these antagonistic systems of thought there can be no doubt that the transcendental philosophy of the Jews, the Qabalah, is the most ancient, and perhaps the nearest to the truth. Transmitted orally, as its name indicates, it ascends even to the cradle of the human race, and therefore, perhaps for this reason, it may be held to be in part the product of that tranquil intelligence, of that acute perception of truth, which, according to tradition, man originally possessed.

If we admit that human nature is a complex whole, we shall find in the Qabalah three distinct divisions—the body, the soul, and the spirit. These differentiate amongst themselves, as the concrete, the particular, and the general, so that the one is the reflection of the other, while each of them holds in itself this triple distinction. Then, if we still further analyse these three fundamental divisions, we shall find that fresh shades of difference will arise, grading from the lowest, the most concrete and material—the external body—up to the highest spirituality which is at the same time the most comprehensive and the most remote.

The first fundamental division, the body with its vital principle, which comprises the three first sub-divisions, bears in the Qabalah the name of Nephesch; the second, the Soul, which is the vehicle of the will, constitutes what may be called the human personality, holds the three next sub-divisions, and is called Ruach; the third, the Spirit, with it three powers, receives the name of Neschamah.

As we have already said, these three basic divisions of man are not completely distinct and separated; on the contrary, they must be imagined as running one into the other, like the colours of the spectrum, which, while being each one distinct, cannot be separated at given points, but grade into one another.

Passing from the body, the infamous power of Nephesch, through the Soul, Ruach, up to the highest spiritual grade, Neschamah, we find all those gradations which mark the passage from darkness through twilight to Light; and in the same way, starting from the loftiest Spirituality and descending to that which is physical and material, is as though we should pass from light to darkness through the growing shadows of the night; and above all, owing to this interior unity, this fusion of parts one in another, the number Nine loses itself in the Unit, in order to produce Man, an embodied spirit, who joins in himself the two worlds.

If we try to represent these ideas by a diagram we shall get the following figure:—

Let the circle *a a a* represent Nephesch; then 1 2 3 will represent its subdivsions; of these 1 corresponds to the body as the lowest and most material part of man; *b b b* stands for the soul—Ruach—of which 4 5 6 are the powers; and *c c c* is Neschamah (the spirit) and its grades of spirituality, 7 8 9, while the exterior circle, 10, is the unity of the living being.

Let us now examine more in detail these different fundamental divisions, commencing by the lowest, Nephesch. This is the life principle or the concrete form of existence; it forms the visible body of the living man; here we have dominant a passive sensibility to the exterior world; necessarily, therefore, ideal activity is least apparent. Nephesch is directly related to concrete existences which are outside of it, and it is only through the influence of these that it can manifest vital energy. But at the same time it also works in the exterior world through its own inherent creative power, causing fresh vitality to exude from its concrete being, thus ceaselessly giving back that which it receives. This concrete grade constitutes a perfect whole, complete in itself, and in which the human being finds the exact representation of its human form.

If we look at it as a perfect unity, this concrete life comprises three degrees which bear the ratio, one to another, of concrete, particular, and general, or matter produced; the producing power and the principle of action which are, at the same time, the organs in and through which the inner spirituality works and manifests itself outwardly.

These three degrees are, therefore, ascendingly elevated and interior, and each holds within itself different shades of energy.

These three powers of Nephesch are situated in the same relation to each other as those which we shall show to exist as the three sub-divisions of Ruach, and act in exactly the same way.

The second element of the human being, Ruach (the Soul), is not so sensitive as Nephesch to exterior influences; passiveness and activity are here in equal proportion; it consists rather of an interior ideality which mirrors all that the concrete bodily life manifests as relative and material. This second human element floats, therefore, between the active and the passive state, or between that which takes place without and that which takes place from within. In its multiple objectivity it does not clearly appear either as something real, passive and exterior, nor as something interiorly intellectual and active; but as that which changes, and which from within manifests outwardly both passively and actively; or as that which seems to give, whilst in reality it only receives So that intuition and conception do not exactly coincide in the soul, though they are not sufficiently separated to prevent them from sinking one into the other.

The kind of life which characterises each being depends entirely on the more or less elevated quality of its cohesion with nature and on the greater or lesser activity, or passivity, which follows. The more active a being, the more spiritual is its condition and the greater capacity for sounding the depths of the inner divinity.

Ruach, made up of forces which lie at the basis of material and objective life, possesses, besides the power to distinguish all the other parts from the standpoint of a distinct individuality, the capacity to act with the initiative of a free will in manifesting itself exteriorly. This soul, which represents both the throne and the vehicle of the spirit, is also the image of the complete man, as we have already said; like Nephesch, it is composed of three dynamic gradations, being in ratio to each other as the concrete, the particular, and the general, or as matter produced, the producing power and the principle; so that there exists not only an affinity between the concrete grade of Ruach, which is its lowest and most exterior (the 4th circle of the diagram) and "the general" of Nephesch, which is its highest sphere of action (circle 3), but also between "the general" of Ruach (circle 6) and the concrete of the Spirit (circle 7). Thus, while both Ruach and Nephesch contain three dynamic degrees, these have three corresponding states in the exterior world, as will be more clearly understood by comparing macrocosm with the microcosm. Each different form of existence in man lives with an innate vitality in its own particular sphere of life, with which it is in a condition of constant inter-action, giving and receiving by means of special interior senses and organs.

Besides this, Ruach, because of its concrete part, requires to communicate with the concrete which is above it, and in the same way its generalising qualities (3rd division) give it a tendency towards those of a superior degree. Nephesch would not be able to bind itself to Ruach if there were no affinities between them, nor could Ruach unite with Nephesch and Neschamah if there was no underlying relationship. Thus the Soul communicates on one side with

the concrete which precedes it in the fulness of its objectivity ; and on the other with "the general" which dominates its inner being, or that ideality which produces itself through its own independent activity. Ruach is therefore the link between "the general" or Spiritual, and the concrete or the Material uniting in man the interior intelligible world with the exterior and real world ; it is both the support and the seat of the human personality.

In this way the soul bears a threefold relation to the two objects of its activity : 1st, the concrete, which is below it ; 2nd, the particular, which corresponds to its own nature and encloses it ; 3rd, the general, which is above it. Three currents circulate through it, blending amongst themselves, for : 1st, it is excited by Nephesch, which is below it, and returns this current as inspiration ; 2nd, there is an active and passive inter-action between it and that which lies around it on a corresponding plane to that of its own nature, the particular ; 3rd, the influence which it receives either from below or outside, and which it assimilates, so that it acquires the power to stimulate Neṣchamah in the higher regions. Through this activity the superior faculties become excited, and are capable of producing vital effects of a more elevated and spiritual character ; these the Soul, becoming again passive, receives, in order to transmit outwardly and to the lower planes of the inner man.

Thus we see that although Ruach is a definite form of existence, possessing individual characteristics, nevertheless the first impulse towards vital activity reaches it from the concrete body, which is inferior to it, and acts as an exciter. While the body, by the change from action to reaction between it and the Soul, becomes penetrated by the latter, thanks to its impressionability ; while the Soul becomes part of the body ; in the same way the Soul, through its union with the Spirit, is filled with it and inspired by it.

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The third fundamental part of the human being, Neschamah, may be called the Spirit, in the sense in which this term is employed in the New Testament. Here we do not find passive sensibility to exterior nature ; activity dominates its receptivity. The Spirit lives through its own individual life, and only for the General or the Spiritual world with which it is in constant relation. Nevertheless, like Ruach, Neschamah requires not only the General or a Divine Infinity, because of its ideal nature, but it also feels the necessity for some relation with the particular and the concrete, on account of the reality of its existence, and consequently it is drawn towards these two.

The Spirit is also in relation with its triple objective, that which is below, that which is exterior, and that which is above ; therefore, there must be a triple interlacing current running through it in two contrary directions, such as that which we have described for Ruach. Neschamah is a purely interior existence, and is both active and passive ; while Nephesch, with its vital principle and its body, and Ruach, with its forces, represent its exterior image. That which is

quantity in Nephesch and quality in Ruach comes from Neschamah, the Spirit, which is entirely interior and ideal. Now, just as Nephesch and Ruach hold within themselves three different existences, or spiritual potentialities, so that each one is a copy in miniature of the whole man, so according to the Qabalah there are three degrees of spirituality in Neschamah.

We have already said that the different forms of existence in the human being are neither distinct, isolated, nor separated; but, on the contrary, mix one with the other. This is pre-eminently true of this highest element; for here all becomes more and more spiritual, and therefore nearer to unity. Of the three superior existences in man which are joined in the widest interpretation of the word Neschamah, the lowest may be called the real Neschamah. This one has still a certain affinity with the higher elements of Ruach. It consists in an interior and active knowledge of the energies and their peculiarities which lie below it. The second power of Neschamah, which is the eighth element in man, is called by the Qabalah Chaijah. Its essence consists in a knowledge of the interior power of intelligence, which acts as a basis for objective and manifested existence, and which, therefore, cannot be perceived by Ruach or Nephesch, and could not be known even by the first or lowest division of Neschamah, or the manifested Neschamah. The third power of Neschamah, the ninth element, and the highest one in man, is called Jechidah, which means "the Unity in its Infinite Absoluteness"; its real essence consists in the knowledge of the fundamental and absolute unity of all things.

Now, let us recapitulate what we have said of the relation existing between the concrete, the particular, and the general. First degree of Nephesch, the body—the concrete in the concrete; 2nd, the particular in the concrete; 3rd, the general in the concrete.

So with Ruach, the first power being the concrete in the particular, the second being the particular in the particular; third, the general in the particular.

And in Neschamah: 1st degree, the concrete in the general; 2nd degree, or Chaijah, the particular in the general; the 3rd, the Jechidah, or the general in the general.

In this way the different activities and virtues of these elements of being manifest themselves.

The Soul (Ruach) has most certainly an individual existence of its own, but it is nevertheless incapable of an individual development without participating in the life of the body (Nephesch), and the spirituality of Neschamah. Besides this, Ruach bears a two-fold relation to Nephesch; influenced by it, the soul is also turned outward in order to exert a free inter-action. In this way the concrete bodily life participates in its own development; the same thing takes place between the spirit and the soul, or Neschamah and Ruach, which through this latter bears a two-fold relation to Nephesch. Nevertheless Neschamah,

besides this, contains within itself the source of its own action, while the activities of Ruach and of Nephesch are only the free and living emanations of Neschamah.

In the same way, Neschamah is to a certain degree in double relation with the Divinity, for the vital activity of Neschamah is in itself an exciting influence causing the divinity to maintain it, and thus procuring for itself the substance necessary to its existence. Thus the Spirit or Neschamah, and through its mediumship both Ruach and Nephesch, draw their vitality involuntarily from the eternal and divine source, which causes them for ever to direct their life work towards higher perfections; while the Divinity continually penetrates Neschamah and pervades its sphere of action in order to give to it life and persistence, as well as to Ruach and Nephesch.

Now, according to the teaching of the Qabalah, man, instead of living in the Divinity, and of receiving from it a continuous flow of that spirituality which he requires, loses himself more and more in his self-love and in the attractions of the sinful world when, after the Fall (Genesis iii., 6-20) he quits his centre for the periphery.

This Fall, and the receding ever further from the Divinity which results, have eventuated in a weakening of the powers of the inner man, bringing with it a corresponding diminution in those of collective humanity. The divine spark has withdrawn itself further and further from man, and Neschamah has lost its intimate connection with God. In the same way, Ruach has become estranged from Neschamah, and Nephesch has lost its union with Ruach. Through this general debility and partial loosening of the bonds connecting the elements, the lowest part of Nephesch, which was originally in man a luminous ethereal form, has become our material body; through this, man has become subject to dissolution throughout the three principal divisions of his constitution.

This is treated of in the Qabalah in that part which considers the question of the Soul during and after death.

Translated from the *Sphinx* into French, and from the French by Thos. Williams

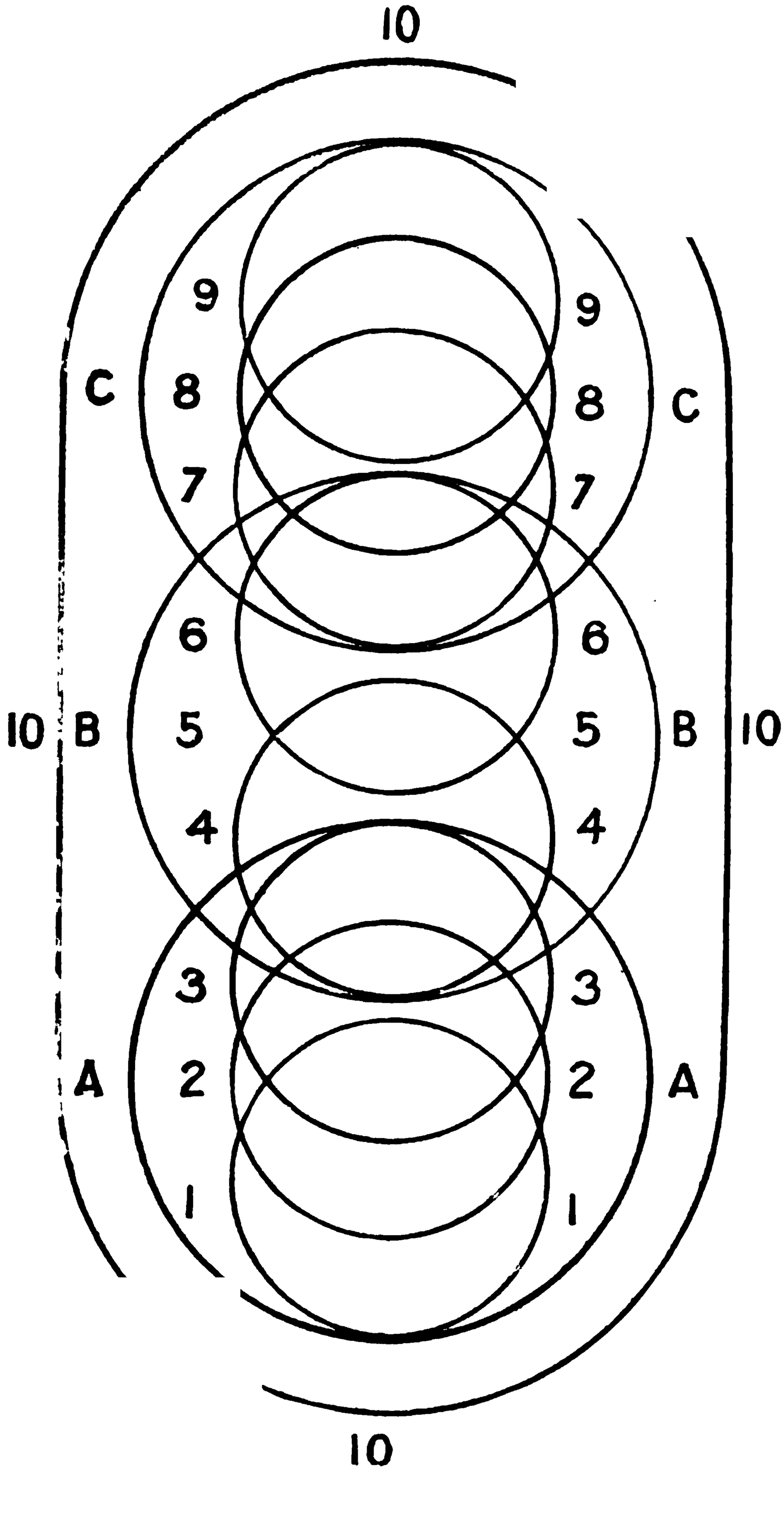
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## PART II.

### The Soul in Death.

According to the Qabalah, Death is but the passage from one form of existence to another. Man is destined eventually to be reunited with God, but this union is impossible for him in his present condition, because of the coarse materiality of his body; this, together with all that is spiritual in him, must undergo a certain amount of purification in order to reach to that degree of spirituality necessary to this new life.

The Qabalah distinguishes between two causes of death. The first consists


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in this: that the Divinity either gradually diminishes or suddenly stops the continual radiation of its influence on Neschamah and on Ruach, so that Nephesch loses that subtle power with which it animates the material body, Death being the result. In the words of the Sohar, the first kind of death may be called "Death from above or from within, without." Thus, the body, an inferior and exterior mode of existence, becoming disorganized through the influence of trouble or the effect of some wound, loses the double power of receiving the necessary influx of spirituality from above, and of rousing into activity Nephesch, Ruach, and Neschamah, so as to make them descend into it. Besides, since each of the three degrees of being in Man bears a different relation to the human body, and is active in a sphere which corresponds to its spirituality, and moreover, since each one becomes united to the body at different periods of its life, it follows that they leave the corpse separately, at different intervals of time, and in an inverse order. Thus the action of dying lasts for a much longer period than is generally supposed.

Neschamah, which is located in the brain, and is, because it represents the highest spiritual life, the last to join the material body, which it does about the age of puberty, is also the first to quit it; indeed, this generally happens before Death actually sets in. She leaves behind her in her Merkabah (chariot or organ) only the after-glow of her presence; for, as said in Esarah Maimoroth, man's personality can exist without the actual presence of Neschamah. Just before Death takes actual possession of the Man, he is invigorated by a higher power of Ruach, which enables him to see things which are hidden from him during life; often his sight pierces Space, and he is able to see his friends and relations who have already passed away through the portals of death.

At the critical moment Ruach spreads through the limbs of the body and takes its leave of them; this produces a shock to the system which we know as the last agony—often a long and painful one. Then all the spiritual essences of the Man withdraw into his heart, and there, like a dove seeking the shelter of its nest, are safe from the Masikim (or bad spirits) which throw themselves upon the corpse.

The separation of Ruach from the body is most difficult, for Ruach, or the living soul, floats, according to Ez-ha-Chaim, between the upper spiritual regions (Neschamah) and the lower bodily or concrete plane (Nephesch); as representing the organ of the will, it constitutes the human personality, oscillating as it does between the two planes. Its home is in the heart; it is, therefore, the root of life (Melekh Ring), the central point and the connecting link between the brain and the liver; and as this is the organ where vital activity first manifests itself, it is here, also, where it first dies. Thus at the moment of death Ruach escapes, and, according to the teaching of the Talmud, leaves the heart by way of the mouth in the last breath.

The Talmud enumerates 900 different kinds of death, each more or less

painful. The sweetest of all is called the "Kiss"; the most agonizing is that where the dying one feels as if a thick chord of hair were being torn from his throat.

When Ruach is once separated the man seems dead; nevertheless, Nephesch is still alive within him. Being the physical life of the concrete, it constitutes the soul of man's elementary existence, and is situated in the liver. Nephesch, which is the lower spiritual power, still possesses a strong affinity for the body, and therefore is attracted by it. It is the last principle to leave, as it is also the first to become united to, the flesh. Nevertheless, as soon as Ruach goes, the Masikim take possession of the body (according to Loriah they are heaped up to a height of fifteen ells above it). This invasion, together with the decomposition of the corpse, soon forces Nephesch to leave it; nevertheless, it stays for a long time near its former home to sorrow over its loss. As a rule, it is only when complete putrefaction has set in that it lifts itself above the terrestrial plane.

The disintegration of the inner man which follows on death is not complete, for, having once been united as one, the parts cannot absolutely separate; there is always a certain relation existing between them. Thus we find a connection between Nephesch and the body even after decomposition has set in. When this material recipient has disappeared, together with its physical vitality, there still remains some of the spiritual essence of Nephesch, which, imperishable, descends into the tomb entangled in the bones; so says the Sohar, and this is what the Qabalah calls "the breath of the bones," or "the spirit of the bones." This undying principle of the material body, which holds in itself the complete form and its characteristics, constitutes the Habal de Garmin, which may be translated as the body of the resurrection (the luminous astral body).

After death has separated the different constituent parts of man, each mounts to that plane to which it is drawn by its nature and constitution, and each is accompanied by beings similar to itself, which surround the bed of the dying, waiting their departure. Since we find throughout the Universe all is in all, and that birth, life, and death take place under the guidance of one basic law; since the smallest element is the reproduction of the greatest, and that the same principle animates those beings which are most brutal and those which are the most spiritual in the higher regions, the whole Universe, which the Qabalah calls Aziluth, and which comprises all degrees, from gross matter to Spirit, from one to the Universal, is divided into three worlds—Assiah, Jezirah, and Briah, which correspond to the fundamental divisions in man: Nephesch, Ruach, and Neschamah. Asiah is the world in which we live; nevertheless, we can only perceive with our bodily eyes its lowest sphere, the physical plane, just as we cognize through our senses the lowest and most material part of man—the body. So that the diagram in Part I. is not only a

scheme for man, but also for the Universe, for, according to the teaching of the Qabalah, the Microcosm exactly reproduces the Macrocosm; man is the image of God, who manifests in the Universe. Thus, the circle *a a a* represents Asiah, and 1 2 3 are its spheres corresponding to those of Nephesch.

Jezirah is represented by *b b b*, and is analogous to Ruach, and 4 5 6 are its powers.

Briah is represented by *c c c*. Its spheres of action, 7 8 9, reach to the highest grades of spirituality exhibited by Neschamah. The enclosing circle, 10, is the image of the All, or Aziluth, in the same way that it represents the unity of human nature. The three worlds, corresponding in position and degree of spirituality to the three divisions of man, represent the planes where each of these three have their being.

The body, the most material form of life for man, lives in the lower spheres of Asiah; in the tomb, only the spirit of the bones lies buried with it, constituting, as we have said, the Habal of Garmin. Here it lies in a deep lethargy, which, for the just, is a sweet sleep. Several passages in Daniel, the Psalms, and in Isaiah, allude to it. And, as the Habal of Garmin preserves a semi-vital sensitiveness, the rest of those lying in this, their last sleep, may be disturbed in many ways. For this reason the Jews ordered that those who had been enemies in life should not be interred side by side; nor should a good man lie next a criminal. On the other hand, care was taken to place together those who had loved, because in death their attachment still continued. The most to be dreaded by those who are buried is invocation; for then, even if Nephesch has left the sepulchre, the spirit of the bones is still joined to the dead body, and may be invoked; but in doing so, Nephesch, Ruach, and Neschamah are also reached. For, although they have each attained to their own proper sphere, yet there is still connection between them which, under certain conditions, can be reanimated; so that what one feels all may feel. This is why the Scriptures (5 Moses xviii., 11) forbid the invocation of the dead.

Since our material senses can only perceive the lowest sphere of the world of Asiah, our eyes can only see the body of man, which even after death remains in the domain of the physical world. The higher spheres of Asiah are invisible, and therefore the Habal of Garmin is also imperceivable; thus the Sohar says: "If our eyes were permitted to see, we should behold at night when the Schabbath is come, or the new moon, or the *fêtes* days, the Diuknim (spectres) arise from the tomb to praise and glorify their Lord." The higher spheres of the world Asiah serve as the home of Nephesch. Ez-ha-Chaüm describes this place as the lower Gan-Eden, "which, in the world of Asiah, extends to the south of the sacred land above the Equator."

The second principle in man, Ruach, finds its proper home in the world of Jezirah, which corresponds to it in spirituality. And, as Ruach is the real personality of man, and the source and fountain of the Will, it is here that

resides his creative and reproductive power; so the world Jezirah, as its name indicates, is the *mundus formationis*, the formative world.

Neschamah corresponds to the world Briah, which the Sohar calls "the world of the divine throne," and which holds in it the highest degree of spirituality. Like Nephesch, Ruach and Neschamah are not completely distinct forms of existence, but they proceed one from the other by progressive gradations of spiritual power, and, in a similar way, the spheres of the different worlds are linked together. Starting from the lowest and most material sphere of the world of Asiah, and which is our visible world, they rise in spiritual tenuity up to the highest and most immaterial spheres of Briah. Thus we see that, like Nephesch, both Ruach and Neschamah find each a home in a corresponding spiritual atmosphere, while remaining in every respect united. The "Zelem" are especially entrusted with the maintenance of the connection between different realms and their powers.

"Zelem" is the name which the Qabalah gives to that shape or aerial form in which the different principles of man exist, and through which they operate. Nephesch, Ruach, and Neschamah, even after death has destroyed their material and exterior envelope, still preserve a certain shape, which corresponds to that of the original man. This form, by means of which each part continues to exist and maintain its vitality in its own particular sphere, is only possible as that of the Zelem; thus it is said in the Psalms (xxxix., 7) they are, therefore, as (phantoms) Zelem.

According to Loriah, Zelem, because of its analogy with the nature of man, is divided into three parts, one an interior and spiritual light, and two Masikim, or enveloping lights.

Each Zelem and its Masikim are in accordance, as to their nature, with the degree of spirituality belonging to that principle to which they are related. Nephesch, Ruach, and Neschamah can only manifest outwardly through their respective Zelem. It is on these that the whole bodily existence of man on earth depends; for every influx from above into the sentiments and the interior senses is transmitted by these Zelem, being, as they are, sensitive to every change of activity. The process of Death is produced entirely in the different Zelem; for Nephesch, Ruach, and Neschamah are not modified; and the Qabalah says that thirty days before a man dies the Masikim withdraw first into Neschamah, afterwards disappearing successively from Ruach and from Nephesch; this we must understand as meaning that they then cease to act in their entire strength; nevertheless, Mischnath Chasidim says that at the moment when Ruach takes its flight they seize with renewed vigour on the pr cessus of life "in order to taste the quality of death." Nevertheless, these beings must always be looked on as purely magical; this is why even the Zelem of Nephesch may not act directly on the world of our exterior perceptions.

That which we see in the apparitions of dead people is either their Habal

de Garmin or the subtle acrial or ethereal matter of the world of Assiah, in which the Zelem of Nephesch dresses itself in order to make itself perceptible to our bodily senses. This applies to every sort of apparition, whether of angels, the souls of the dead, or of an inferior spirit.

Therefore, it is not the Zelem itself which we see with our eyes, but its image, made of the subtle "vapour" of our exterior world, and which, therefore, is a form capable of distant dissipation. The other worlds offer as many conditions of existence to the departed Soul as there are varieties of material life on earth; for the more we infringe the ordinances of divine laws in our earthly career, so much the greater will be the necessity for punishments and purification.

The Sohar says on this subject: "The beauty of the Zelem of a man depends on the good works which he has accomplished here below"; and, further on, we find, "evil-doing soils the Zelem of Nephesch."

Loriah also says, "The Zelem of the good and holy are pure and clear; those of the wicked are dark and troubled."

This is why each world has for each one of the principles in man its Gan-Eden, or paradise, its Nahar Dinur, (river of fire for purification) and its Gei-Hinam, or place of torture, for the erring ones. The Christian creed has derived its heaven, purgatory, and hell from these three.

We do not intend to enter into the question of the condition of the Soul after death as shown in the Qabalah, and more especially where it refers to its punishments. A clear *exposé* of what it says on this subject will be found in that celebrated work of Dante, "La Divina Comedia."

From the *Sphynx*. Thos. Williams (translator).

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# SYMPATHY.

SOMEWHERE among his words of deep wisdom Walt Whitman has written these:—

"Whoever walks a furlong without sympathy
Walks to his own funeral, dressed in his shroud."

It was a bold image, and yet was hardly too strong to express the state of him who shuts himself out from communion with his kind. For the man thus encased in his own egoism entrenches himself in a dreary isolation far worse than that of his coffin, since that can only confine his body, and has no hold

upon his heart and soul. It was well said by Talfourd that unless a man learns to feel for things in which he has no personal interest, he can achieve nothing generous or noble. To ordinary eyes the man without sympathy is an active member of society, he controls great affairs, his word is law to many of his fellow-men, his name stands high upon the list of those whom "the world" delights to honour, but to the spiritual insight, like that of the poet, "he walks to his own funeral, dressed in his shroud."

And there is the isolation of sorrow, for among the men and women who people our streets, who are our daily companions and intimate friends, nay, perhaps walk side by side with us through life, there are many who carry a dead heart in their bosoms, who, in truth, are no longer alive, but from their vacant eyes looks forth only the ghost of what they once were, the shadow of their living past. Some terrible calamity, some slowly creeping treachery, some awful sense of loss has wrecked their lives for ever, and although their bodies still wander desolately about their accustomed haunts, still drearily pursue their accustomed occupations, they are like those unhappy ones described by Dante, who have no longer any hope, even of death. Like dreary ghosts upon the shores of Styx, they wait in a land of shadows, for the grim ferryman to bear them whither they know not, nor do they care.

If there is the isolation of sorrow, there is also the isolation of joy, of the plenitude of well-being, the indifference of those with whom the world goes well, to everything outside their sphere of careless ease. If the others be dead, these are asleep, and lulled in the soft security of happy dreams, they walk through a world veiled in a soft and perfumed mist, that sheds a rosy light over all they seem to see. But such as these, the favoured ones of life, should go about as light-bearers to their less fortunate brethren. Their happiness should radiate like sunshine upon all who come within their reach, their smile should be reflected in every eye that meets theirs, and the world be better and brighter that it has such joy to look at. The happiness of children is contagious, they cheer the dreariest heart, because they insist upon you sharing in their delight and will take no denial.

There are other souls of quite a different texture, who live always in the lives of others, who seem to have almost lost their sense of individuality, and to identify themselves with humanity at large, to lose their own joys and sorrows in those of the race. To these generous natures come all the weary and heavy laden, and, in bearing the burdens of others, they find their own peace and rest. Every breath of passion or suffering from another's soul stirs their sympathies, and these flow forth as sweetly and unconsciously as the fragrance from a wind-swept rose.

We cannot all be like these gracious souls, and some of us have to learn to respond, have to cultivate the power of hearing the voice of humanity, the inarticulate appeal, and have to train the tongue to answer in a language that

can be understood. The stronger individuality is less flexible, and responds less easily to another's touch; the oak resists the breeze that bends the reed. There are diversities of gifts, and while one person shall have the power of being always in harmony with those about him, of instantly catching the key-note of his fellows and responding in tune, another must painfully labour and blunder towards the same end.

All these are in a certain sense the active forms of sympathy. But there is another and a passive type, by which we receive that which belongs to us. Emerson hints at this in his poem of "Guy," who

> "In strange juncture felt with awe
> His own symmetry with law:
> That no mixture could withstand
> The virtue of his lucky hand.
> . . . .
> It seemed his Genius discreet
> Worked on the Maker's own receipt.
> . . . .
> So that the common waters fell
> As costly wine into his well."

For what is "symmetry with law" but a subtle sympathy with the ruling forces of the universe? Dante tells us in the *Banquet*, that when the purity of the receiving soul is absolutely free from any corporeal shadow, then the Divine Goodness multiplies in her as in a thing worthy to receive it, and, furthermore, *according to her capacity of reception.* If you sing to a piano with perfect purity of tone, the piano will give back a clear, sweet echo of your note, but if your voice fall short of the proper number of vibrations, there will be no response. We may learn from the laws of the natural, the laws of the spiritual world, and this will explain the truth of the saying in "The Seclusion of the Adept": "No voice can penetrate to his inner hearing till it has become a divine voice." When you have learned to strike the corresponding note, the string will vibrate, but not till then.

> "Not unrelated, unaffied,
> But to each thought and thing allied,
> Is perfect Nature's every part,
> Rooted in the mighty Heart."

Do we seek, then, to receive, we must fit ourselves to receive; the house that would entertain a royal guest must be swept and garnished. We must feel, like Emerson's "Guy," our own symmetry with law, if we expect the universe to bring its treasures to our feet. Only in the pure soul does the Divine Goodness multiply, says the great Italian seer, and, furthermore, only according to her capacity. No man can expect to carry home the ocean in a pint bowl.

And the only sure way to receive this goodness is to increase our sympathy with the good. The more closely we attune ourselves to the pitch of the

Higher Self, the swifter and clearer will be the response, and the stronger and more far-reaching the harmonies evoked. To the pure in heart all things are pure, because in the presence of that purity evil cannot live. Darkness is cast out by light. In Hawthorne's exquisite story of "Dr. Rappacini's Daughter," the beautiful Beatrice, who had been fed on poisons, lived unharmed among venomous things, but her very breath was deadly to all things innocent. One of the fundamental laws of nature is that like seeks like, and to make ourselves into the likeness of the thing we desire is the surest way to attain it. What belongs to us by force of this law, sooner or later shall surely be ours, and we may say with Walt Whitman:

"Whether I come to my own to-day, or in ten thousand or ten million years,
I can cheerfully take it now, or, with equal cheerfulness, I can wait.
My foothold is tenon'd and mortis'd in granite;
I laugh at what you call dissolution;
And I know the amplitude of time."

And what surer way can there be of enlarging our capacity to receive than by broadening our sympathy with our fellow-men? Each person that comes into intimate relation with us opens up to us some new vista of thought, some fresher glimpse of truth and love. There is not only the same note evoked by the appeal in perfect unison to an instrument, but accompanying its full vibration are the over-tones, that complete the chord. The more we give the more we shall receive. We lose our own life to find it; we give up our own individuality to share the depths of another's soul, and lo! from out of those depths our own image smiles back to us, and we learn to know ourselves from sympathy with other men. To sympathise, to feel and suffer with our fellow-creatures, is to merge our own existence into the life of the world, to feel the beating of the universal heart, and to realize, in Emerson's words again, "that within man is the soul of the whole; the wise silence; the universal beauty, to which every part and particle is equally related; the eternal One."

KATHARINE HILLARD.

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NOTICE.—The Hypno-Therapeutic Institute of Madrid, respecting which a notice appeared in one of our colleagues, is calling much attention abroad, and continues obtaining the adherence to it of the principal personages of Europe, to the extent that, besides H.I.M. the Emperor of Germany, they have already in the list of patrons several other crowned heads, as well as eminent scientific men. The institute has professors, who hold classes and give lectures, having a hall for the purpose, a laboratory furnished with all necessary instruments, a reading-room, and a well-fitted hospital to treat in and out patients by the hypnotic system. According to the latest news from Madrid, the founder and director of it, Doctor Count de Das, is proving most active and practical in his idea of making it a true model for other countries to follow.

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